

TO: Parents of Students in Dr. Neufeld's History Class
FROM: Dr. Neufeld
RE: "Apocalypto"
DATE: January 17, 2024

In this history class, we will soon be finishing our unit on the history of the Americas, in particular the empires of the Olmec, Aztec, Maya and Inca tribes. With your permission, I would like to show a film about the last few years of the Maya Empire. The Mel Gibson film is titled "**Apocalypto**." It covers what would become the empire with extended time in Central America and all of their achievements as they declined.!

This film made in 2006 is about the last few years of the Maya Empire. As we have learned in our studies, there are many similarities among the Olmec, Maya and Aztec Empires. The Aztec Empire is most known for their religious practice of human sacrifice. This film is rated R for such scenes. While there are very few scenes of human sacrifice, such scenes deal with the decapitation of slaves for the Aztec gods. These scenes are filmed from a distance. **I have edited this film so that it is appropriate for middle school students** while at the same time showing how life was in the 1500s in MesoAmerica. **I have placed two official trailers for this movie on my website.**

If you would like to view this film before making a decision, it can be found on many apps such as Netflix, Amazon, etc.

On the back of this paper is more information on the film. I also listed two websites you could use to learn more about the film. If you would like more information, or if you would like to see the film yourself, you can e-mail me at doug_neufeld@lawndalesd.net.

Thank You!

*Please return the tear-off portion below by **Thurs., Jan. 25, 2024!***



Please PRINT the Name of Student

Period for History Class

Yes, my child can watch the 2006 film "**Apocalypto**".

No, I prefer that my child not watch the film and complete another project instead.

Parent Signature

Two reviews of "Apocalypto":



Synopsis from IMDB website:

This movie begins with a band of brothers hunting a tapir. They seemed to be very happy, enjoy each other's company and even engage in a fratboy style of communal fun. They are interrupted by a migration of other villagers whom have been attacked and run off their land. This visit sits in the mind of Jaguar Paw (Rudy Youngblood). At the village he wakes one morning to find a band of Mayan soldiers attacking his settlement. He rushes his pregnant wife and young son into a deep hole for insurance of safety. He is captured (as are all of the surviving adults). They are tied to bamboo poles and forced to walk through perilous terrain to the Mayan civilization. On this journey they encounter a young girl who delivers an omen to the Mayan soldiers that one of their captives will bring them all to their end. Upon arrival at the Mayan civilization the women are sold into slavery and the men are to be offered as a sacrifice to the Mayan Gods.

Jaguar Paw was saved only by an eclipse and was eventually able to escape to freedom, but not until after he killed the Mayan general's son. The Mayan soldiers chase Jaguar Paw through the corn field, the jungle, over waterfalls, etc. He is able to eliminate them slowly throughout this process. He arrives back to retrieve his wife (whom had given birth in the hole) and his son(s).

From IMDB website:

Forget any off-screen impressions you may have of Mel Gibson, and experience Apocalypto as the mad, bloody runaway train that it is. The story is set in the pre-Columbian Maya population: one village is brutally overrun, its residents either slaughtered or abducted, by a ruling tribe that needs slaves and human sacrifices. We focus on the capable warrior Jaguar Paw (Rudy Youngblood), although Gibson skillfully sketches a whole population of characters--many of whom don't survive the early reels. Most of the film is set in the dense jungle, but the middle section, in a grand Mayan city, is a dazzling triumph of design, costuming, and sheer decadent terror. The movie itself is a triumph of brutality, as Gibson lets loose his well-established fascination with bodily mortification in a litany of assaults including impalement, evisceration, snakebite, and bee stings. It's a dark, disgusted vision, but Gibson doesn't forget to apply some very canny moviemaking instincts to the violence--including the creation of a tremendous pair of villains (strikingly played by Raoul Trujillo and Rodolfo Palacias). The film is in a Maya dialect, subtitled in English, and shot on digital video (which occasionally betrays itself in some blurry quick pans). Amidst all the mayhem, nothing in the film is more devastating than a final wordless exchange of looks between captured villager Blunted (Jonathan Brewer) and his wife's mother (Maria Isabel Diaz), a superb change in tone from their early relationship. Yes, this is an obsessive, crazed movie, but Gibson knows what he's doing. --Robert Horton .

For more information about this film, check out these two websites:

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0472043/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Apocalypto-Blu-ray-Raoul-Trujillo/dp/B000NQQ4MEhttp://video.movies.go.com/apocalypto/>