

News Of Education



Turning Movie Magic Into Math And Science Lessons

(NAPSA)—There's a lot more to Hollywood magic than smoke and mirrors. Popular movie and TV shows about zombies, superheroes, asteroids and cold cases only come to life because of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Now, thanks to a free education program, STEM-inspired scenes are taking a role in middle school and high school classrooms to teach students about real-life math and science and get them excited about STEM subjects and careers. "STEM Behind Hollywood" provides online classroom activities that help teachers demonstrate the real-world concepts behind popular Hollywood themes, including zombies, space, superheroes and forensics.

The "STEM Behind Hollywood" classroom activities use fictional scenarios—such as the outbreak and spread of a zombie pandemic shown in the *Zombie Apocalypse* activity—to help students explore what scientists and mathematicians actually do to solve related real-world problems, such as controlling the spread of avian flu or Ebola outbreaks.

"It's important to know zombies aren't real, but we can still engage students' thinking about what makes them sick and have teachable moments on epidemiology and neurology," says Dr. Steven C. Schlozman, Harvard Medical School professor and renowned author of "The Zombie Autopsies: Secret Notebooks from the Apocalypse." He and other experts from The Science & Entertainment Exchange, who consult on films and TV shows to ensure the accuracy of science and math depicted on-screen, worked with leading educators to develop the activities.



A classroom activity on examining a zombie outbreak scenario really helps students learn about math and science in real-world applications.

Each activity can be downloaded to the TI-Nspire CX handheld, TI-Nspire Software or TI-Nspire Apps for iPad, allowing students to visualize and interact directly with representations of the math and science to gain a deeper understanding of the real-world concepts.

The program was developed by Texas Instruments with help from The Science & Entertainment Exchange, a program of the National Academy of Sciences, as well as with Emmy-nominated actress, neuroscientist and STEM education advocate Mayim Bialik.

"STEM careers are the fastest-growing opportunities in our global economy, and students need a strong education to gain a competitive edge," says Bialik. "Using the 'cool factor' of movies and TV to teach real-life math and science concepts is a great opportunity to capture students' imaginations and attract them to the world of STEM."

Teachers, students and parents can visit www.stemhollywood.com to learn more about the program, access the free activities and sign up for notifications when new activities are available.