

# WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

## EDUCATOR GUIDE IN THEATERS THIS JUNE



### THE FILM

Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Morgan Neville's latest documentary takes an intimate look at America's favorite neighbor: Mister Fred Rogers. A portrait of a man whom we all think we know, this documentary is an emotional and moving film that takes you beyond zip-up cardigans and the land of make-believe, and into the heart of a creative genius, who inspired generations of children with compassion and limitless imagination.

### THEMES

**The film showcases themes that can stimulate discussions and engagement with students:**

- Inclusion and Kindness
- Media and Communication
- Behavior and Goodness

## DISCUSSION *BEFORE* VIEWING THE FILM

**Prior to taking your students to view the film, pose the following questions to your students and ask them to conduct research and craft answers. Spend some class time to discuss their answers.**

- Have you heard of Mister Rogers? Have any of you seen an episode of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood?
- What is the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)? Why was it formed? How is it funded?
- What programs do you remember watching when you were young? What impact did those programs have on you?
- What are three ways that media (TV in particular) impacts the way we behave?



## DISCUSSION *AFTER* VIEWING THE FILM

**Fred Rogers held fast to his beliefs and as you see in the film, he never faltered from the messages he promoted.**

- Kindness
- Inclusion
- Spreading good
- Inspiring caring and loving behavior starting at a young age
- Leveraging mass media for 'good'

For group sales visit: [www.mrrogersgroups.com](http://www.mrrogersgroups.com)

Advance private screenings are available. If interested, please email [mr.rogers@2656marketing.com](mailto:mr.rogers@2656marketing.com).

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### LESSON PLAN IDEAS

There are wonderful lesson plans that could come from the themes explored in the film. Here are some suggestions:

#### MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

- How did Fred Rogers use television to spread his message?
- What technologies available today could he have used and how?
- Would he have had the same impact without television?
- Knowing what you know now about Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, are there any programs that you watched as a child that taught some of these same values?
- Are there any programs that you watched that you think might have had a negative impact on children?
- Would Mister Rogers have the same impact on children today? Why or why not?
- Is there anyone similar to Mister Rogers who exists today?

#### INCLUSION & KINDNESS

- What was unique about Mister Rogers' message?
- How is his messaging applicable today?
- How can you take what he did and use it in your lives today?
- As one person, he had a lot of impact and inspired a generation of children. What can you do to make a difference?

#### BEHAVIOR & GOODNESS

- Who inspires you to be kind? Why?
- The film shines a spotlight on this statement, "Make goodness attractive." What does that mean? How can you make goodness attractive?
- How would Mister Rogers have tackled cyber bullying?
- Are there lessons from Mister Rogers that you can apply to your behavior today?
- How can you inspire others to be kind and caring?

### ACTIVITIES

#### Suggested activities to extend the lessons:

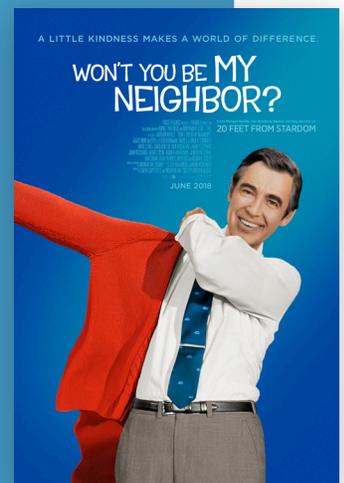
- Expand on any of the discussions above with a writing prompt to further explore the theme.
- Break the classroom into groups and have them create a short 30-60 second video (PSA) to promote inclusion and kindness to share with the school and their peers (this could also be done with posters and photos).

### RESOURCES:

[www.focusfeatures.com/wont-you-be-my-neighbor](http://www.focusfeatures.com/wont-you-be-my-neighbor)  
[www.fredrogerscenter.org](http://www.fredrogerscenter.org)  
[www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)  
[www.pbs.org/about/about-pbs/overview](http://www.pbs.org/about/about-pbs/overview)

**Sign up** to get a free film poster to post at your school.

*"It will make you laugh, and it will certainly make you cry, but better yet it will make you appreciate Fred Rogers and his legacy, as well as hopefully inspiring you to be a little kinder towards the people you meet in life."*  
-Film Threat / Anthony Ray Bench



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