

## **Supplementary learning packet for Elementary School Silent Movie Assembly Program (Grades 2-6)**

**Program Description:** The students will about early animation devices and inventions that resulted in the development of the motion picture. Then, a connection will be made to Thomas Edison - America's greatest inventor – and his invention of the motion picture camera. After explaining how to watch silent movies, a variety of important film clips that were made during the “Golden Age of Silent Movies” between 1894 and 1929 will be shown.

“Mood” musical accompaniment will be added to the movies that you watch. This powerful music matches the feeling of the movie and it adds emotion to the actors' words you cannot hear.

### **Vocabulary to share before the assembly program:**

**Silent Movie:** Film before 1929 had no sound track so it was necessary to have a piano player or organist provide live music at movie theatres.

**Pantomime acting:** The actor uses accentuated body language and facial expressions (in place of speaking) to communicate what is happening in the movie.

**Persistence of vision:** A motion picture is made up of many photographs or frames that are flashed onto a movie screen one frame at a time. Each new frame looks very close to the previous frame. Your brain now turns all of these pictures into a moving picture because it remembers the previous picture as you continue to watch the remaining frames on the film.

### **How staff and students can contribute to a great learning experience and show:**

Students sit respectfully and attentively so they can absorb this learning experience and be ready to thoughtfully contribute.

### **Possible follow up Assignment:**

Pick one of the movie clips that you saw in the assembly program and write about it. Based on what you just learned about watching silent movies, answer these questions:

- 1) Describe the main character by using observations of their pantomime acting.
- 2) Summarize how the music, pantomime acting and the film told a story.

3) If you could not hear the actors speak, how did you know what was happening in the movie? Give specific examples.

4) What do you remember about the musical accompaniment? How did the music somehow match the feeling or mood that you saw in the movie clip?

### **Note on persistence of vision learning kits**

(designed by Richard Hughes):

This is a great way for students to build, see and understand how motion pictures work. The finished kit works like the old penny arcade Mutoscopes by flipping pictures and causing you to think there is real motion. Taking it a step further, students can work (individually or in pairs) in a learning center setup to create their own animations from the additional specially designed flip cards. Their own creations can now be easily inserted and flipped in the device. The kits can be used at the discretion of the teacher either before or after the assembly program.