

CASA of San Luis Obispo

Book n Movie Group Past Selections

When you need to a book or movie for your Continuing Education, a good starting point is the materials already discussed by the CASA Book n Movie Group. Here are brief summaries of those titles:

Books

An Invisible Thread

Laura Schroff

Non fiction. Relates the lifelong friendship between an NY ad executive and the poor boy she befriended in the street. CASAs relate to this work because it shows how the influence of a caring adult can improve the life of a struggling child.

Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine

Gail Honeyman

Fiction. Through Eleanor, you'll learn about the importance of friendship and human connection. She is an eccentric and regimented loner learning to live a normal life after being raised in foster care.

Enrique's Journey

Sonia Nozario

Non Fiction. Traces a boy who leaves his South American home to find his mother in America. Includes photos of Enrique and his family.

The Glass Castle

Jeannette Walls

Memoir. One woman's story of overcoming poverty and abuse to complete college and succeed in life. A hard read, but a good read.

The Grown Ups Guide To Teenage Humans

Josh Shipp

Once an at-risk foster kid, Josh faced a "future that was likely to include prison or homelessness--until he met the grown-up who changed his life. Enter Rodney, the foster parent who refused to quit on Shipp and finally got him to believe in himself." This is the MOST popular book we have discussed.

Hillbilly Elegy

J.D. Vance

Memoir. One man's story of overcoming poverty and abuse to complete college and succeed in life. A hard read, but an uplifting story.

Life Animated: A Story of Sidekicks, Heroes, and Autism

Ron Suskind

Autism trapped young Owen inside his own head, but he and his family found a way out through Disney movies, using the characters, dialog and songs as "language" that eventually enabled Owen to interact with those he loved, and the world.

Into the Magic Shop

James Doty, MD

Autobiography. A boy born poor and raised without much family support manages to become a neurosurgeon, and he attributes it all the impact one caring adult had on his life.

Orange is the New Black

Piper Kerman

Autobiography of a white, college-educated woman's time in a federal penitentiary.

The Primal Wound

Explores the affect of adoption on infants. (This was the least favorite book of the group to date.)

Runaway Girl

Caraissa Phelps

Autobiography. Same person as the movie, Carissa. From a life on the streets and on the run, Carissa escaped life on the streets to create a successful life for herself. She is from the Central Valley and now lives on the Central Coast.

Spare Parts

Joshua Davis

Tells the tale of a robotics team from a poor high school, comprised of four undocumented kids, that competes against MIT—and wins. A light, short and easy read.

Movies

Autumn's eyes

Follows the travails of 3 year old Autumn as she faces her mother's incarceration, severe poverty, and potential move to foster care.

Beasts of the Southern Wild

Academy-Award nominated film, shows "a forgotten but defiant bayou community cut off from the rest of the world" where "a six-year-old girl, Hushpuppy, exists on the brink of orphanhood"

Carissa

Local story. Today holding both law and business degrees, in her teen years Carissa was homeless and forced into prostitution.

Girl Rising

Showcases girls from around the world affected by the power of education or lack thereof.

Know How

Film written and acted by foster youth. It gave the CASA's who saw interesting insights into the choices foster youth have in their lives. For example, "I can become a drug dealer tomorrow, but I can't become a doctor tomorrow."

Lion

After becoming lost on the streets of Calcutta, a 5 yr old boy eventually winds up adopted by an Australian family. As a young adult, he sets out to find his birth family... and does.

The Mask You Live In

Companion to Miss Representation, exploring how society forces men into narrowly defined roles. Very good.

Miss Representation

Spells out how the media and other sources define and value women in our society. Very good.

Short Term 12

A young woman supervisor at a youth residential treatment facility navigates the troubled waters of that world.

Won't You Be My Neighbor

A sweet and uplifting review of Mr. Roger's and how he influenced children's TV and his moral beliefs. It was very popular with the Book n Move Group.