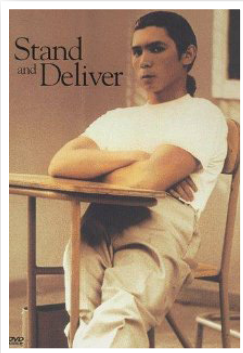


Stand and Deliver

Synopsis



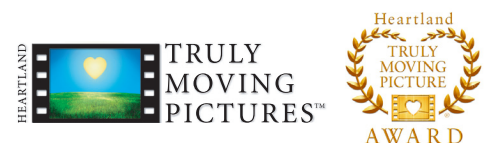
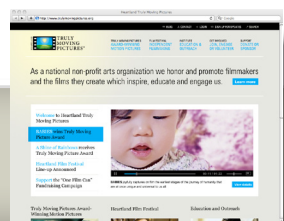
Jaime Escalante, a no-nonsense mathematics teacher in a tough East LA high school, is handed a classroom full of "losers" and "unteachables". Escalante is determined to turn his young charges' lives around. Drawing from his own cultural heritage, Escalante forms a bond with his largely Hispanic student body, evoking the names of famous Spaniards and Latin Americans whose great accomplishments were predicated on their ability to learn.

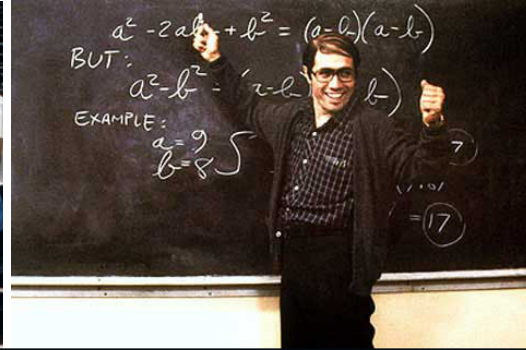
Discussion Questions

- Mr. Escalante, based on a real teacher, motivated his students to stay in school before and after normal school hours, and even in the summer, just to get ahead. Have you ever had a teacher who really motivated you to go above and beyond what you would normally do in school? What about that teacher motivated you so much?
- Do you believe that these students came into Mr. Escalante's class with the love of math? Why was he able to teach these students to the point where 100% of them passed the Advanced Placement test twice?
- What were the main philosophical differences between the chair of the math department and Mr. Escalante? How did each feel the students should be treated? How did each feel about the expectations placed upon students?
- Many people passed these students off as unteachable. Why do you think this was the case?
- Angel and Mr. Escalante often had a stressed relationship. Why do you think their relationship was so volatile?
- How did Mr. Escalante discipline students who caused trouble in class? Do you think he was too harsh sometimes? Do you think he should have done anything differently? How would you have handled Mr. Escalante's classroom if you were in his shoes?

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Stand and Deliver

- Mr. Escalante wanted students to see how important taking the Advanced Placement math test would be for their lives. What are some things that he did for his students to emphasize the importance of looking into the future rather than expecting instant gratification?
- Why do you think the students and Mr. Escalante did not want to retake the test initially? Why was retaking the test a last resort?
- Do you believe that educators are underappreciated in our society? Why or why not? Think about the time and energy that Mr. Escalante put into his job. What are some ways you can think of to better demonstrate an appreciation for educators?

Activities

- Have you ever had a teacher who impacted your life like Mr. Escalante impacted his students? Write a letter or email to this teacher (if you can find his or her contact information) and let them know how they impacted your life.
- There are many films about teachers teaching in low-income or inner-city schools. Watch another one of these movies. Compare and contrast the strategies that the teachers or administrators used and evaluate what strategies you believe would be most effective. Check out the Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film *Freedom Writers* as another good example.

Get Involved

- In addition to teaching his high schoolers, Mr. Escalante volunteered to teach an English class for Spanish speakers at night. Use a skill or knowledge that you have to volunteer as a tutor or teacher. If you don't feel qualified, there are many young students who just need practice reading and need someone there to listen.
- Many young people come from homes where parents are very busy and aren't able to help them as much as they would like. Become a mentor to a younger person through a program like Big Brothers Big Sisters or Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

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