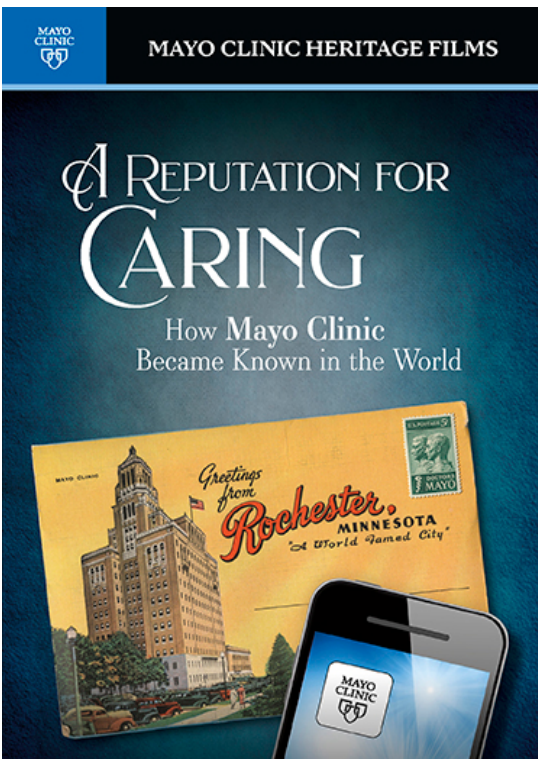




Mayo Clinic Heritage Films Discussion Guide

A Reputation for Caring: How Mayo Clinic Became Known in the World



Dr. Will and Dr. Charlie Mayo never sought to be famous, but the story of two brilliant brothers operating in “a clinic in a cornfield” was irresistible to journalists of their time. As grateful patients spread word up and down the railroad, newspapers and magazines made Mayo a household name.

The Mayo brothers welcomed the opportunity to serve patients from around the world while seeking to protect their name from “quacks and fakers” who sought to exploit it. Through the years, Mayo has often been in the headlines for important medical discoveries—and has also popped up in movies, TV shows and social media in a unique blending of fact, fiction and fun.

The attributes and values of Mayo Clinic that first caught the world’s attention have maintained its reputation for more than 150 years and made its name synonymous with medical excellence.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think is the primary reason the Mayo brothers caught the world’s attention?
2. What were the advantages of Saint Marys Hospital being “a clinic in a cornfield” instead of being located in a large city?

3. In 1910, a journalist wrote of the Mayo brothers, “In just twenty years the world found them out and today the beaten path has been made to their door.” What do you think would be required for that to happen today?
4. How does Mayo being featured in movies and TV shows affect the public’s perception of it?
5. What do you think are the most effective ways for Mayo Clinic to share its story today?
6. How has social media changed Mayo’s relationship with its patients and its management of its reputation?
7. What do you think is Mayo Clinic’s role in a global health crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic?
8. Going forward, what does Mayo need to do to maintain its position as the epitome of excellence in patient care, medical education and research?