

1C Which film?

Activity type: Reading, speaking and writing – Reading comprehension / Vocabulary deduction / Writing a film review – Pairs/Individuals

Aim: To practise using language for talking and writing about films

Language: Adverb + adjective / Relative clauses / Film vocabulary – Use at any point from Explore writing.

Preparation: Make one copy of each worksheet for every pair of learners. Cut each worksheet to make four film reviews from Worksheet 1 and two activities from Worksheet 2. You could also copy Worksheet 1 separately onto card and stick the four reviews up around the classroom (enlarge to A3 if so).

Time: 40–45 minutes

- 1 Ask learners: *What do we call the person who writes criticisms of films, etc. in a newspaper, in a magazine, or online?* (a critic); *What do we call the piece of writing that gives someone's opinion about a film, etc.?* (a review) Tell learners they are going to read four film reviews and answer some questions about them.
- 2 Give out Worksheet 1 along with Section A from Worksheet 2 to each pair. Learners read the reviews. Ask learners which (if any) of the films in the reviews they have seen. Did they like them?
- 3 Give learners a time limit (ten minutes) to complete the questions. Get them to check their answers with a partner first, then check with the whole class.

1 B 2 CTHD 3 CP 4 CP/P 5 P 6 CP/CTHD 7 B 8 CTHD/CP 9 P
10 CTHD 11 P 12 B

- 4 Give a copy of the second half of Worksheet 2 (Sections B and C) to each pair. Remind learners of the *which* expressions they looked at in the book reviews in Explore writing (CB p12). Tell them that similar expressions are also missing from the film reviews. Learners match phrases a–f with gaps 1–6 in the reviews.

1 a 2 c 3 f 4 e 5 d 6 b

- 5 Give learners a time limit – for example, three minutes – to find and highlight as many adverb + adjective combinations as they can. The pair who finds the most wins.

really beautiful, absolutely stunning, especially emotional, completely boring, mildly interesting, truly realistic, extremely uncomfortable, completely exhausted, especially talented, beautifully animated, absolutely terrifying, extremely powerful, brilliantly written and animated, easily the best, absolutely incredible, truly stunning, really interesting

- 6 Learners look at the vocabulary in bold in the reviews and work in pairs to try to work out the meanings from context. Then read out these definitions. The first pair to find the matching word wins a point.

a all of the actors in a film
b a person represented in a film
c the story of a film
d actors' parts in a film
e the person who makes the film

f the people who watch the film
g the action of the film takes place in a particular place/time
h the words of a film
i the written translation of a film at the bottom of the screen

a cast b character c plot d roles e director f audience g set h script i subtitles

Extension

Learners think of a film they've seen recently that they liked/disliked and write a review using the ones in the activity as models, either in class or as homework.

1C Which film? 1: Reviews

1 An absolutely perfect film for movie addicts

Cinema Paradiso, which was the winner of the 1989 Oscar for Best Foreign Film, is a romance, and what a wonderful movie it is!

The **plot** is about a romance between a boy and girl, but also about the boy's love for movies. Young Salvatore is growing up in a Sicilian village and finds that he can escape his boring life through movies, so he develops a really beautiful relationship with old Alfredo, the projectionist and film fanatic.

When Sal grows up, he becomes the projectionist and also turns his attentions to Elena, the daughter of a wealthy banker. The story is told through flashback, and we learn that Salvatore will one day become a famous filmmaker.

Cinema Paradiso is full of absolutely stunning scenes. It's simply one of the most romantic films ever made, and the ending is especially emotional, (1) _____

2 If you enjoy a depressing film, this is the one for you!

Babel is an ambitious film which tells four stories **set** in different countries. This slow movie is completely boring most of the time and occasionally mildly interesting. None of the stories feels truly realistic. To try to make it more realistic, the **director** instructs his cinematographer to move the camera around as much as possible, (2) _____

It starts in a remote area of Morocco where a tourist (Cate Blanchett) is hurt in a shooting accident. From this point, we go from Morocco to Mexico, to Tokyo, San Diego and back again every few minutes for scene after miserable scene, which makes extremely uncomfortable viewing. This continues for two-and-a-half hours until we leave feeling completely exhausted.

Fortunately, there are excellent performances from the **cast**, (3) _____

Adriana Barraza (the Mexican maid) and Rinko Kikuchi (the Japanese schoolgirl) are especially talented actresses.

Babel is rated R, (4) _____, but it includes sexual images, bad language, drugs and violence. It is in English, Spanish, Japanese, Arabic and Japanese Sign Language with English **subtitles**. A little too much maybe? Perhaps if the movie was an hour shorter, it might be watchable.

3 A simple story told simply

Persepolis is a beautifully animated drama based on Marjane Satrapi's autobiographical novels about a girl growing up in Iran. It is moving and funny at the same time. It received a prize at the Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for an Oscar.

Marjane is a rebellious girl who has problems with teachers and the police before her parents decide to send her to be educated abroad. Despite finding love and friendship in Vienna, she longs to return to the country she loves.

The film closely follows the black-and-white style of the novel, and some parts are impressively made. For example, the bombing scenes are absolutely terrifying, thanks to some excellent sound design work.

Marjane is a lovely **character** that we care about, and the **script** is extremely powerful. There's also a lot of humour in the film, which comes from Marjane's naughty nature.

Overall, *Persepolis* is an emotional, brilliantly written and animated drama that you have to see.

There'll be some laughter, a few tears and then you'll rush out to buy the novel.

4 You've never seen an action film like this!

Within the first five minutes of this movie, you'll wonder when you've ever felt so excited in a cinema. It is easily the best kung-fu film I've ever seen. There are four absolutely incredible fight scenes, (5) _____ However, four fight scenes do not fill two hours of film.

The director, Ang Lee, combines a truly stunning mixture of classic Chinese kung fu with modern drama. He mixes two love stories and a subplot of revenge and honour to create a film that is like a beautiful painting that you can look at for hours.

Another really interesting point is that the film sees men and women as equal, with Michelle Yeoh and Zhang Ziyi playing main **roles**, (6) _____

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon was nominated for six Academy awards and won four, as well as many other awards.

For people who love Hollywood action films, here is the film that you have been waiting for.

1C Which film? 2: Questions

A Which film/films ...

- 1 was disliked by the critic?
- 2 is a martial-arts film?
- 3 is set in Italy?
- 4 might make you cry?
- 5 is adapted from a book?
- 6 are love stories?
- 7 was filmed on different continents?
- 8 have won Oscars?
- 9 is based on a true story?
- 10 shows actresses as strong characters?
- 11 might frighten you?
- 12 is too long?



B Complete the gaps in the film reviews (1–6) with these phrases (a–f).

- a which means you'll need plenty of tissues!
- b which is something you don't often find in action films.
- c which just makes the **audience** feel sick.
- d which will make you want to run up walls and fly over rooftops when you leave the cinema.
- e which means children under 17 can watch with an adult
- f which save the film.



C Find and underline as many adverb + adjective combinations in the film reviews as you can.

EXAMPLE: *absolutely perfect*