

# Movie / Film vocabulary

## Actors' description

- Handsome
- Attractive
- Plain
- Overrated
- Impeccable
- Boring
- Extrovert
- Sophisticated
- Agile
- Sinister
- Multi-talented
- Beautiful
- Absurd
- Versatile
- Ironic
- Glamorous
- Idiotic

## Special effects:

- Spectacular scenes
- Uses simple and ordinary effects
- Technically and visually stunning
- Mediocre visuals
- A compelling work of science-fiction
- Unimaginative, implausible and ridiculous
- An eye-opening expose
- A cliché-ridden script and familiar narrative
- Chock full of high-tech dazzling action
- Features manic action

## Comedy:

- You'll laugh till it hurts
- Silliest blockbuster
- An offbeat but touching romantic comedy
- Slapdash comedy
- Light and entertaining
- Goes overboard with slapstick and effects
- Spiced with plenty of humor and affection
- Crude and offensive
- A funny political satire
- Lacks originality, ingenuity, humour, and charm
- Gut-busting laughs
- An overly melodramatic tearjerker

### **Thriller/horror/mystery/suspense:**

- Mammothly entertaining stuff
- Dark, thrilling and mysterious
- A big-reveal thriller with surprises that do NOT surprise
- A clever, heart-pounding thriller
- An obvious, predictable plot
- Suspenseful expose
- A dull and repetitive interpretation

### **Actor/character performance:**

- Charismatic leads
- Merely passable acting
- Brilliant performance
- Poorly executed
- Unprecedented success
- Emotionally inadequate
- Refreshingly honest and utterly charming
- A tired and monotonous
- A well-acted, intensely shot, action filled war epic
- Fails to come up with interesting characters

### **Movie review vocabulary**

Movie reviews include different elements of the movie including:

- Director – the person who directed the movie
- Rating – 1-5 number of stars, 5 stars is the best review
- Starring – the names of the actors in the movie
- Producer – the person/company that produced the movie
- Based on – used when a movie is based on a book

### **Movie genres**

- Action/Adventure – fighting, chases, explosions, and fast scenes
- Animation – computer-animated or hand drawn characters
- Comedy – funny, funny, and more funny
- Documentary – story about someone or something that actually took place in history
- Drama – emotionally charged personal challenges
- Foreign – any movie not in English
- Horror/Thriller/Suspense/Mystery – dark, scary and bloody scenes
- Kids/Family – fun for the whole family
- Romance – a love story
- Sci-Fiction/Fantasy – not a true story, but based on make-believe, full of imaginative ideas
- and special effects
- Musical – story told with song and dance

### **Some other vocabulary related to film/movie**

- action
- adventure
- animation
- catch a movie
- classic
- documentary
- drama
- foreign film
- go to the movies
- horror
- lines
- main characters
- movie review
- movie theatre
- musicals
- plot
- romance
- science fiction
- suspense thriller
- western
- buy some popcorn
- buy tickets
- catch a movie
- get a drink
- go to a movie theatre
- read a movie review
- sit in an aisle seat
- wait in line
- watch a movie trailer
- watch the credits
- watch the previews
- take a seat
- at the front
- in the middle
- at the back
- exciting
- interesting
- marvellous
- moving
- terrific
- wonderful
- absurd
- awful
- boring
- terrible
- weird

### **Useful phrases**

- x has much to recommend it.

- X is, at heart, a(n) love/spy/adventure story.
- It is based on a book by ...
- It is set in the countryside/the future.
- The film has a quality cast.
- The film was directed by ...
- The film score is enchanting/evocative/scary.
- The film captures the spirit of ...
- The hero/heroine/villain is ...
- I felt/thought it was ...
- I was impressed by ...
- What struck me most was ...
- What I liked most/didn't like was ...
- The plot was gripping.
- The characters were very convincing/very well drawn.
- On reflection, I think it was ...
- It struck me as being ...
- What I didn't understand was how ...
- In spite of these few criticisms, I think ...
- I would have no hesitation in recommending ...

## Useful Adjectives for Describing Movies

- Here is a list of vocabulary that reviewers often use when describing movies.
- I have divided them into three categories: positive, negative, and neutral.
- Note that depending on the combination of words used, they may change from neutral to positive or negative.

### Positive

first-rate	insightful	clever
charming	comical	charismatic
enjoyable	uproarious	original
tender	hilarious	absorbing
sensitive	riveting	intriguing
powerful	fascinating	pleasant
surprising	dazzling	thought provoking
imaginative	legendary	unpretentious

## Negative

second-rate	violent	moronic
third-rate	flawed	juvenile
boring	distasteful	ordinary
disgusting	senseless	static
brutal	confused	disappointing
bloody	silly	tired
predictable	stupid	uninteresting
weak	incredibly tiresome	trite
uneven	cliché ridden	outdated
dreadful	bland	

## Neutral

suspenseful	low-budget	dramatic
highly-charged	sentimental	fantasy
slow	romantic	satirical
fast-moving	oddball	picaresque
big-budget	wacky	

Kind of film (genre)

- drama
- action film
- thriller

Producer

- produced by ...

Director

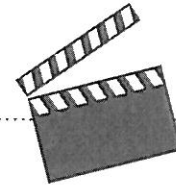
- a film directed by ...
- to develop a story
- well-directed
- expertly directed.

Screenplay/script

- ... from a screenplay by ...
- multi-layered script
- screenwriter ...
- The script was written by ...
- ... co-writes ...
- ...'s writing is astonishing/plausible/witty
- tightly written
- give characters the opportunity to ...

Setting/atmosphere

- is set in ...
- The story unfolds in ...
- ... provides the setting for ...
- create a certain atmosphere/mood



Actors/characters

- exceptional performance
- fervently performed, well acted
- ... does a very good job as ...
- The performances in ... are excellent.
- ... gives the part much personality
- ... adds a lot to the film
- ... is absolutely remarkable/especially memorable as ...
- ... is very/less convincing ...
- The most complex/incredibly played character is that of ...
- newcomer
- a film full of wonderful characters
- appealing, fascinating, funny, stereotypical, two-dimensional, warm-hearted

Plot/story

- amusing, boring, clichéd, confusing, entertaining, exciting, melodramatic, thrilling, unbelievable
- arouse curiosity
- full of tension
- build up to/reach a climax
- develop a story
- interlocking stories/fragmented narrative/non-linear narrative
- unexpected plot twists
- One of the most surprising moments in the film occurs when ...



Dialogue

- melodramatic
- (un)convincing
- realistic

## Music/soundtrack



- The music conveys a sad/happy/melancholy atmosphere
- The music underlines a mood/evokes feelings/shows a character's emotions/connects scenes
- The music and the lyrics support the plot.

## Miscellaneous

- The film contains a few funny bits.
- ... full of humorous moments
- The film gets extremely dramatic in places.
- One of the most poignant scenes of the movie ...
- powerful scenes
- final scene
- The film is close to reality.

## Evaluation

- a must-see/a smash hit
- a box-office success/failure
- an audience pleaser
- well worth seeing
- not to be missed
- a moving production/an emotionally strong film
- a truly great piece of filmmaking
- a skilful piece of filmmaking
- an impressive debut
- a very moving portrayal
- I definitely recommend this film to everybody ...
- The film is a worthwhile watch.
- On a scale from zero to five, I give this film a five.
- The film literally brought tears to my eyes.
- I highly/strongly/definitely recommend the film.
- If you like ..., this is the film for you.
- If you found films like ... or ... compelling then be sure to give ... your full attention.
- I certainly wouldn't recommend the film, because ...
- I'm afraid ... is a complete waste of time and money.
- It's a film that will change the way you think about ...
- I was impressed by ...



## Adjectives you could use

action-packed, amusing, badly acted, balanced, beautiful, (extremely) boring, breathtaking, captivating, compelling, complex, (totally/slightly) confusing, contrived, disappointing, enigmatic, enjoyable, entertaining, exciting, fantastic, (totally/rather) far-fetched, (truly) fascinating, funny, gripping, hilarious, humorous, inspiring, lousy, manipulative, masterful, perfect, poignant, powerful, (un)realistic, ridiculous, romantic, overacted, overrated, overwhelming, (im)perfect, predictable, provocative, silly, stupid, surprising, super, tense, unbelievable, unoriginal, (highly) uplifting

- ▶ *When writing a film review, use words and phrases from the list.*
- ▶ *You can add expressions from film reviews you have read.*

# Some Vocabulary for Talking about & Reviewing Movies

(how to write a movie/film review)

## Movies(styles)

This is ..(adj)....movie.  
This is a ....(noun)..

action, horror, thriller, comedy, romance, sci-fi, western, musical, drama, family, animation, fantasy, western

## Character

the character he played was ..a/the

lead role, hero, heroine, villain, small part, sidekick, supporting character, cool, a killer, a heart throb, evil, the funniest, a thug etc.

## Plot

the plot is about...

a man chasing a killer, the hero and heroine, love, a haunted house, government corruption....

## Scenes

it had a good/bad..

opening scene, ending, action scene, romantic scene.....

it was set on....  
it took place on...

a boat, a mountain, in Italy, in space, on another planet....

## General Descriptive Phrases

the movie had good/bad

acting, camera work, too much violence, soundtrack, visual effects, directing..



# A Vocabulary for Film Reviews

Acting	Family friendly	<b>Protagonist</b>
Adrenaline	Fantasy	Relevant
Adventure	Fearful	Rib-tickling
Animation	Feel-good	<b>Scene</b>
<b>Antagonist</b>	Franchise	Sceptical
Awesome	Genuine	Scheming
Believable	Hilariously	Senseless
<b>Cameos</b>	Hollywood	Serious
<b>Camera shots</b>	Hopeful	<b>Set Design</b>
Catalyst	Inappropriate	Shocked
Celebration	Inspiring	Spoof
Charismatic	Joyous	Storyline
Classic	Life-affirming	Superbly
Clever	Ludicrous	Tear-jerking
Cowardly	Lump-in-the-throat	Tenacious
Dangerously	Malcontent	Tense
Daring	Maniacal	Thanks to
Dark	Mise-en-Scene	Threatening
Delivers	<b>Montage</b>	Thrilled
<b>Diegetic sound</b>	Music	Thwarted
<b>Director</b>	<b>Non diegetic sound</b>	Treacherous
Domination	Obsessed	Unsettling
Elements	Plotting	Whimsical
Enthral	Poignant	Woeful
Evil	Popcorn	Wonderful
Excursion	Production	Yawn-inducing