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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>first-rate</th>
<th>insightful</th>
<th>clever</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>charming</td>
<td>comical</td>
<td>charismatic</td>
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<tr>
<td>enjoyable</td>
<td>uproarious</td>
<td>original</td>
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<tr>
<td>tender</td>
<td>hilarious</td>
<td>absorbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensitive</td>
<td>riveting</td>
<td>intriguing</td>
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<tr>
<td>powerful</td>
<td>fascinating</td>
<td>pleasant</td>
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<tr>
<td>surprising</td>
<td>dazzling</td>
<td>thought provoking</td>
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<td>imaginative</td>
<td>legendary</td>
<td>unpretentious</td>
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### Negative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>second-rate</th>
<th>violent</th>
<th>moronic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>third-rate</td>
<td>flawed</td>
<td>juvenile</td>
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<tr>
<td>boring</td>
<td>distasteful</td>
<td>ordinary</td>
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<tr>
<td>disgusting</td>
<td>senseless</td>
<td>static</td>
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<tr>
<td>brutal</td>
<td>confused</td>
<td>disappointing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bloody</td>
<td>silly</td>
<td>tired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predictable</td>
<td>stupid</td>
<td>uninteresting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td>incredibly tiresome</td>
<td>trite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uneven</td>
<td>cliché ridden</td>
<td>outdated</td>
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<tr>
<td>dreadful</td>
<td>bland</td>
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### Neutral

<table>
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<tr>
<th>suspenseful</th>
<th>low-budget</th>
<th>dramatic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>highly-charged</td>
<td>sentimental</td>
<td>fantasy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slow</td>
<td>romantic</td>
<td>satirical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fast-moving</td>
<td>oddball</td>
<td>picaresque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big-budget</td>
<td>wacky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

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

Actors/characters
- ... 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 début
- 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)*

- **Character**
  - the character he played was *(a)* the...

- **Plot**
  - the plot is about...

- **Scenes**
  - it had a good/bad...

- **General Descriptive Phrases**
  - the movie had good/bad

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

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

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

Opening scene, ending, action scene, romantic scene........

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

Acting, camera work, too much violence, soundtrack, visual effects, directing..
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Vocabulary for Film Reviews</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acting</td>
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<td>Adrenaline</td>
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<td>Adventure</td>
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<td>Animation</td>
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<td>Antagonist</td>
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<td>Awesome</td>
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<td>Believable</td>
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<td>Cameos</td>
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<td>Daring</td>
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<td>Director</td>
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