

**A Talking about films and books**

When a new book or film comes out, newspapers will review it. The people who review the book/film are called book reviewers / film critics and they write book/film reviews. If they don't like a book/film they give it a bad review. We can say that a novel or film is based on a true story. We say that a book/film captures an atmosphere or that a book/film deals with a topic. We talk about the opening/closing scenes of a film and the opening/closing chapters of a book. We talk about the beginning and end of a book/film (NOT start and finish). If everything works out well for the central characters, we say that the book/film has a happy ending. You may recommend a book/film that you enjoyed to a friend. If a lot of people have enjoyed it, it is highly recommended.

**B Just about films and acting**

I've never had any desire to go on the stage<sup>1</sup> myself but I'd love to produce a film. I think historical dramas work particularly well on the big screen<sup>2</sup> and I'd love to make a film about Vikings in Britain. There'd be plenty of opportunities to use special effects<sup>3</sup> during battle scenes. I'd want the male lead<sup>4</sup> to be played by Hugh Grant, while Nicole Kidman could have the female lead. Sean Penn could play the role of a Viking warrior and I'd like Judi Dench to take on a cameo role<sup>5</sup>. I'm sure that, as always, she would give an excellent performance. My dream is to make a film that would be nominated for an Oscar<sup>6</sup>. Of course, I'd also like it to be an immediate box-office hit<sup>7</sup>, playing to full houses<sup>8</sup> worldwide.

<sup>1</sup> become an actor

<sup>2</sup> the cinema

<sup>3</sup> powerful visual effects,  
often created using technology

<sup>4</sup> main male part

<sup>5</sup> small but special part

<sup>6</sup> put on the official list of people in the film world  
who may receive a special prize (an Oscar)

<sup>7</sup> extremely successful with audiences

<sup>8</sup> cinemas/theatres with no empty seats

Other strong collocations are cast a film [select the actors for a film], star in a film, shoot a film, make a film.

**C Just about books**

collocation	example
be engrossed/absorbed in a book	Sal was so <b>engrossed/absorbed in her book</b> that she didn't hear me.
compulsive reading	Many people find articles about the private lives of film stars <b>compulsive reading</b> . [so interesting you can't stop reading]
bedtime reading	I don't think a horror story makes good <b>bedtime reading</b> .
an easy read	Detective stories are good for train journeys as they're <b>an easy read</b> .
take out / borrow / return / renew a library book	You can <b>take out/borrow</b> six <b>library books</b> at one time. You should <b>return your library book</b> tomorrow. I'm going to <b>renew my library book</b> for another week.
flick/skim through a book	Mona <b>flicked/skimmed through the book</b> without reading it in detail.
beautifully written	The book is <b>beautifully written</b> – I highly recommend it.

**ERROR WARNING**

Critics **review** books and films, NOT ~~criticise~~ them. To *criticise* a book or film means to say negative things about it.

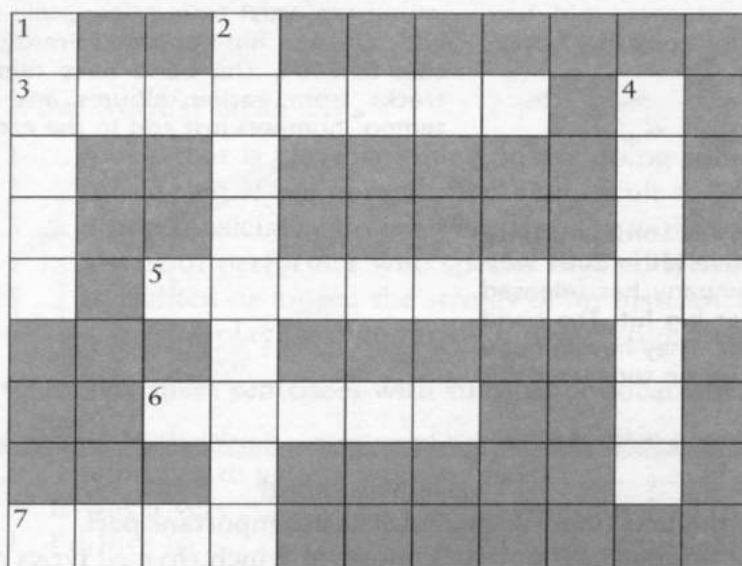
Remember that you **watch television**, NOT **see** television, but you can **see** or **watch** a **film** or **programme** on television. We usually say **see a film** at the cinema.

## Exercises

- 24.1** Use collocations from A opposite instead of the underlined words in this conversation. The conversation has no errors, but the changes will improve it.

Matthew: Have you read that new book that has just appeared about Ireland?  
 Lorna: No, I don't go to bookshops and I don't read articles discussing new books. What's it about?  
 Matthew: Well, it concerns the Irish War of Independence. It's very authentic and it manages to give the atmosphere of Ireland at the beginning of the 20th century.  
 Lorna: Is it just historical facts, then?  
 Matthew: No, the main people are two brothers who have different opinions about the war and this divides their family. In the first chapters they're happy and do everything together, but by the last chapter they have become enemies.  
 Lorna: Mm, it sounds a bit depressing to me.  
 Matthew: Well, it certainly doesn't finish in a happy way, but I liked it, and it's recommended very much by all the critics.  
 Lorna: So, a book with a pleasant start and a sad finish. Not for me, I'm afraid. I prefer the opposite.

- 24.2** Complete the crossword.



### Across

3 I was completely ..... in my book and didn't realise how late it had got.  
 5 An alternative to 3 across.  
 6 He wants to go on the ..... He's always wanted to be an actor.  
 7 Who played the male ..... in *Destination Saturn*?

### Down

1 ..... role means 'small but special part in a film/play'.  
 2 The film was ..... for an Oscar but it didn't win.  
 4 It was an amazing film about space travel, with fantastic special .....

- 24.3** Match the words in the box on the left with their collocations on the right.

full      big      bedtime  
female      box-office

screen      reading  
lead      hit      house

- 24.4** Complete these collocations.

- 1 shoot / star in / make a .....  
 2 renew / borrow / return a .....  
 3 flick / skim through a .....  
 4 compulsive / bedtime .....

**FOLLOW UP**

Online bookshops, for example, *Amazon*, often have mini-reviews and descriptions of books and DVDs. Find a review of a book or film that you know and note down any interesting collocations in it.

- 23.3** 1 Suzie            4 Nina  
 2 Ken                5 Polly  
 3 Richard        6 Archie

- 23.4** 1 **Processed foods** may damage our health in the long term.  
 2 Some people always have three **square meals** a day, but I prefer a **hearty breakfast** and then a **light meal** around midday and a more **substantial meal** in the evening.  
 3 There are some overpriced restaurants in the city centre, but down at the beach, there are some nice, **reasonably priced** ones.  
 4 On my birthday my parents took me out for a **slap-up meal**. They wanted to go for a **gourmet meal** but I said I'd prefer something more ordinary.  
 5 Ice tea is a **refreshing drink** on a hot day, and is probably better for you than soft **drinks** such as cola or lemonade.  
 6 Let me take you out to dinner on your birthday. Or would you prefer a **home-cooked meal**? I could make dinner for you at my place.

## Unit 24

- 24.1** Matthew: Have you read that new book that has just **come out** about Ireland?  
 Lorna: No, I don't go to bookshops and I don't read **book reviews**. What's it about?  
 Matthew: Well, it **deals with** the Irish War of Independence. It's very authentic and it manages to **capture the atmosphere** of Ireland at the beginning of the 20th century.  
 Lorna: Is it just historical facts, then?  
 Matthew: No, the **central characters** are two brothers who have different opinions about the war and this divides their family. In the **opening chapters** they're happy and do everything together, but by the **closing chapter** they have become enemies.  
 Lorna: Mm, it sounds a bit depressing to me.  
 Matthew: Well, it certainly doesn't **have a happy ending**, but I liked it, and it's **highly recommended** by all the critics.  
 Lorna: So, a book with a pleasant **beginning** and a sad **end(ing)**. Not for me, I'm afraid. I prefer the opposite.

- |             |               |             |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>24.2</b> | <b>Across</b> | <b>Down</b> |
|             | 3 absorbed    | 1 cameo     |
|             | 5 engrossed   | 2 nominated |
|             | 6 stage       | 4 effects   |
|             | 7 lead        |             |

- 24.3** full house  
 bedtime reading  
 box-office hit  
 big screen  
 female lead

- 24.4** 1 film                      3 book/magazine/article  
 2 (library) book      4 reading

## Unit 25

- 25.1** 1 The band's last CD was a **massive/big hit**.  
 2 There are some great **up-tempo** numbers on this new CD.  
 3 The band has a **huge** following of dedicated fans.  
 4 Music was **blasting out from** a CD player when I entered the house.  
 5 She gave a **virtuoso** performance of Heder's violin concerto last night.