

# Lesson 3 – TV and Movies

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## Conversation #1 – Talking about TV

*Emily and Dave are a husband and wife who are relaxing in front of the TV on a Saturday night. Listen to them decide on which TV show to watch.*

**Emily:** Are you watching this, or can I change the channel?

**Dave:** Oh - no, go ahead.

**Emily:** Where's the remote?

**Dave:** On the table. Is there anything good on tonight?

**Emily:** The Big Bang Theory! I love this show, it's hilarious.

**Dave:** Really? I'm not a huge fan. The dialogue is so contrived.  
*(contrived = artificial, not natural or believable)*

**Emily:** Shhh, it's starting! Oh no, it's a rerun. I've already seen this episode.

**Dave:** Let's see what else is on. What do you feel like watching?

**Emily:** Something entertaining... no talk shows or documentaries.

**Dave:** The Bachelorette?

**Emily:** Ugh, you know I can't stand that show!

**Dave:** The Price is Right?

**Emily:** Nah, I'm not in the mood for a game show. Why don't you stop channel surfing and just check the TV guide?  
*(I'm not in the mood for = at the moment, I don't want)*

**Dave:** Hey, the season finale of Lost is on channel 5.

**Emily:** Yeah okay, let's watch that.

## Conversation Phrases & Vocabulary

A few different types of TV shows are mentioned in the dialogue. Here's a list of the general categories of TV programs:

- **"What kind of TV shows do you like to watch?"**
- **"I like to watch..."**
  - **the news**  
*(reports about current events)*
  - **talk shows**  
*(programs that discuss events and topics in more detail)*
  - **documentaries**  
*(educational programs about history, travel, nature, or culture)*
  - **game shows**  
*(programs where people compete to win prizes)*
  - **sitcoms**  
*(short for "situation comedy" - a half-hour show that shows the life of a family or group of people)*
  - **cartoons**  
*(animated programs, often for kids)*
  - **soap operas**  
*(fictional programs about the daily lives and relationships of the same group of people)*
  - **crime series**  
*(shows in which police and detectives try to solve crimes)*
  - **reality shows**  
*(programs that film everyday people in real situations)*
- **"I'm addicted to / hooked on... [TV show]."**  
*this is an informal way to say you REALLY like a show, and you can't stop watching it!*

Emily asks Dave if she can **change the channel**. We can refer to different TV channels by the name of the network - for example, CNN, ESPN, or the Discovery Channel - or by the number (channel 4, channel 5, etc). We use a device called a **remote control** - or simply "**remote**" for short - to change the channel.

Towards the end of the conversation, Emily tells Dave to stop "**channel surfing**" - if a person is channel surfing, it means he is changing the channels very fast, without stopping to watch anything.



Informally, TV programs are often called **shows** - as when Emily said "I love this show." TV shows can be organized into a **series** with various **seasons**, each one composed of various **episodes**. Each episode = one 30-minute or 60-minute program.

The last episode of a season is called the **season finale**, and the last episode of the series is called the **series finale**. After the series finale, the series ends and no more new episodes are produced.

This diagram will help show the difference!

In the dialogue, Emily is disappointed because the episode of the Big Bang Theory on TV is a rerun - this means it is not a new episode; it is an old episode that is appearing on TV again.



Here are some additional phrases for talking about TV watching:

- **"Can I change the channel?"**
- **"Where's the remote?"**
- **"What's on?" / "Is there anything on?"**  
*These are typical ways to ask what programs are appearing on TV at the moment*
- **"Could you turn up the volume?"**  
*turn up = increase. turn down = decrease*
- **"He spends hours glued to the TV." / "He's a couch potato."**  
*these expressions describe someone who watches a LOT of TV and is lazy*
- **"I never miss an episode of my favorite show."**
- **"This commercial is really funny."**  
*the advertisements on TV are called "commercials."*

## Conversation #2 – Talking about Movies

Bill and Wanda are two friends who are chatting about movies. Listen to their conversation to learn some new vocabulary and phrases.

**Bill:** Have you seen the trailer for the final part of the *Space Wars* trilogy?

**Wanda:** No, but I've read the reviews – they say the premise is intriguing, but the plot is hard to follow.

**Bill:** Oh, really? That's too bad. When I saw part two, I was on the edge of my seat the whole time. And the special effects were stunning. My son loved it too.

**Wanda:** You took your son to that movie? What's it rated?

**Bill:** Well... it's PG-13. Mostly because of the violence, I think. There wasn't too much profanity.

**Wanda:** If you say so. I think I'll skip *Space Wars III* though. I prefer chick flicks – and comedies, as long as they don't go overboard on the potty humor.  
(*chick flicks = movies that women typically enjoy*)

**Bill:** You know, there's a sequel to *The Notebook* coming out this fall.

**Wanda:** A sequel? I heard it was a remake. I'm not sure who's starring in it, but they'll have a hard time topping the original cast.  
(*topping the original cast = being better than the actors in the original movie*)

**Bill:** Oh, you might be right. What's your favorite movie, by the way?

**Wanda:** *Life is Beautiful*. It's sort of a mix of comedy and drama – about a family that lives through the Holocaust. It's very touching; I always cry at the end.

**Bill:** I haven't seen that – actually, I've never heard of it.

**Wanda:** It's an Italian film – and you should definitely watch it with subtitles. Don't bother with a dubbed version; it loses all the expression of the original language.

**Bill:** I'll keep that in mind!

## Conversation Vocabulary & Phrases

We have a number of movie-related vocabulary words in this conversation. Bill starts by asking Wanda if she's seen the **trailer** for a new movie - a "trailer" is a short, 2-3 minute video summary of a movie, showing a few scenes that will interest people in seeing the entire movie.

He mentions a **trilogy** - that's a series of 3 movies (like *Lord of the Rings*). Later in the conversation, two more words for movies are used - a **sequel** and a **remake**. A **sequel** is a second movie that continues the story from the first movie - for example, *American Pie* and *American Pie 2*. And a **remake** is a new version of an old movie - it tells the same story, but with new actors and in a new way.

Wanda asks what the movie is **rated**. The rating of the movie tells you if it is appropriate for various age groups. This is the list of movie ratings in the U.S.:

- **G** - General audience - OK for everyone
- **PG** - Some material in the movie might not be OK for children
- **PG-13** - Parents are strongly cautioned – there's inappropriate material for children under 13 years old
- **R** - Restricted - Children under 17 can only enter if accompanied by a parent or guardian
- **NC-17** - Adults only.

Wanda also mentions movie **reviews** - these are evaluations of the movie written by **critics** (a critic is a person who professionally evaluates movies). A movie has only one official **rating**, but it has various **reviews** – because different critics and different people probably have different opinions of the movie.

The general group of actors and actresses in a movie is called the **cast**. Sometimes we use the verb “star” or “starring” to describe the main actors who are featured in the movie:

- Titanic, **starring** Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet, was one of the most popular movies of the decade.
- Forrest Gump **stars** Tom Hanks as a mentally-challenged man who lives through many historic moments.

Finally, Wanda recommends an Italian film and she tells Bill to watch it with **subtitles** - that's when the translated words appear as text on the screen. On the other hand, if a film is **dubbed**, that means the dialogue has been recorded by voice actors in a different language, and the original audio is then replaced by the new audio.

Now practice these positive, neutral, and negative comments for talking about movies:

### Positive comments:

- **“It was hilarious.”**  
*hilarious = very funny*
- **“It was pure adrenaline.” / “I was on the edge of my seat the whole time.”**  
*these phrases describe movies that are very exciting*
- **“It was very touching/moving.”**  
*touching/moving = had a strong emotional effect*
- **“The special effects were stunning.”**  
*stunning = amazing, very surprising in a good way*

- **“There are some incredible stunts.”**  
*stunts = acrobatic movements and dangerous tricks performed by people in the film*
- **“I loved the soundtrack.”**  
*the music used in a movie is called the “soundtrack.”*
- **“The opening scene was very powerful.”**  
*the different situations in a movie are called “scenes”*
- **“There was an interesting twist at the end.”**  
*a “twist” is a surprising/unexpected change of events*
- **“It was nominated for an award.” / “It won a couple awards.”**
- **“The critics gave it four and a half stars.”**  
*sometimes movies are evaluated on a scale of 1-5 stars (5 stars being the best)*
- **“It was a real hit / blockbuster.”**  
*these phrases describe a movie that’s popular and successful*

### Neutral comments:

- **“What's it rated?”**
- **“It's directed / produced by... [director's/producer's name].”**
- **“It stars... [actor/actress].”**
- **“He plays... [name or description of character].”**
- **“It's based on a true story.”**
- **“It's set in... [location]” / “The story takes place in... [location]”**  
*use these phrases to describe the location of the story in the film*
- **“It was filmed/shot in... [location]”**  
*use this phrase to describe the real location where the movie was filmed*
- **“It has subtitles.”**
- **“It's dubbed.”**
- **“It's a sequel.”**
- **“It's a remake.”**

### Negative comments:

- **“There's a lot of profanity. It's not appropriate for kids.”**  
*profanity = swearing/cursing, “bad” words*
- **“There's graphic sex/violence.”**  
*“graphic” means the sex and violence is shown clearly and explicitly*
- **“There was too much blood and gore.”**  
*“blood and gore” refers specifically to violence*

- **“The plot was hard to follow.”**  
*this means the progress of the story was hard to understand*
- **“There was lots of potty humor.”**  
*“potty humor” is humor involving sex, bodily functions, or disgusting things*
- **“It wasn't very believable.”**  
*this means the film was not realistic; it was hard to believe*
- **“The characters were shallow / one-dimensional.”**  
*this means the characters in the movie were not complex or interesting*
- **“It was a flop.” / “It bombed.”**  
*these phrases describe a movie that was NOT successful*

You've finished Lesson 3! There were a lot of new words in today's conversations – so make sure to take the quiz to help you remember them better.

## Quiz – Lesson 3

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### Question 1

A member of the film crew was almost killed during one of the \_\_\_\_\_ in a car chase scene.

- A. hits
- B. stunts
- C. twists

### Question 2

Do you know who's \_\_\_\_\_ in the next James Bond movie?

- A. casting
- B. dubbing
- C. starring

### Question 3

Everyone says the \_\_\_\_\_ of the movie is better than the original version.

- A. remake
- B. review
- C. trailer

#### Question 4

For my dad's birthday, I gave him all eight \_\_\_\_\_ of House on DVD.

- A. finales
- B. seasons
- C. soap operas

#### Question 5

I can't stand this show. Change the \_\_\_\_\_!

- A. channel
- B. episode
- C. remote

#### Question 6

I stayed up late watching \_\_\_\_\_ of my favorite show.

- A. repeats
- B. reruns
- C. returns

#### Question 7

I thought the movie was \_\_\_\_\_, but my husband thought it was boring.

- A. crying
- B. feeling
- C. touching

#### Question 8

The main character was very \_\_\_\_\_ and entirely based on racial stereotypes.

- A. contrived
- B. shallow
- C. unbelievable

#### Question 9

It's hard to watch a 3D film with \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. legends
- B. ratings



C. subtitles

### Question 10

I've asked you three times to \_\_\_\_\_ down the volume on the TV!

- A. change
- B. put
- C. turn

### Question 11

My brother only likes action movies that are \_\_\_\_\_ adrenaline.

- A. full
- B. pure
- C. top

### Question 12

My kids can only watch \_\_\_\_\_ after they've finished their homework.

- A. cartoons
- B. commercials
- C. sitcoms

### Question 13

Several of the actors won \_\_\_\_\_ for their performances in the film.

- A. awards
- B. blockbusters
- C. honors

### Question 14

The film is \_\_\_\_\_ in 18th-century Japan.

- A. set
- B. shot
- C. starred

### Question 15

The first movie was great, but the sequel was a \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. flop

- B. gore
- C. potty

### Question 16

The plot was hard to \_\_\_\_\_ and the ending just left me confused.

- A. accompany
- B. follow
- C. relate

### Question 17

The wedding was definitely the funniest \_\_\_\_\_ in the movie.

- A. scene
- B. star
- C. stunt

### Question 18

There's nothing interesting \_\_\_\_ TV in the early afternoon.

- A. at
- B. in
- C. on

### Question 19

Tickets to opening night of the movie are already sold out - looks like it's going to be a real \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. blast
- B. bomb
- C. hit

### Question 20

Was the film \_\_\_\_\_ on a true story?

- A. backed
- B. based
- C. brought

# Quiz Answers

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1.B 2.C 3.A 4.B 5.A 6.B 7.C 8.B 9.C 10.C

11.B 12.A 13.A 14.A 15.A 16.B 17.A 18.C 19.C 20.B

Image sources:

- Remote control: [esponsorvik](http://esponsorvik.com)