

## **The 50 must-see children's films**

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0507/050721-movies.html>

### **Today's contents**

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
After Reading	6
Discussion	7
Speaking	8
Listening Gap Fill	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

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## THE ARTICLE

### The 50 must-see children's films

**BNE:** The British Film Institute (BFI) has released a list of 50 movies that are a must-see for under-14-year olds. The list was compiled from a survey of more than 70 eminent movie critics, who were asked to submit their ten most recommended children's movies from around the world. The result is an eclectic array of familiar Hollywood blockbusters, such as *ET* and *Toy Story*, and more obscure releases such as *Where is the Friend's House*, an Iranian movie released in 1987. The film that came top of the pile is Hayao Miyazaki's 2001 movie *Spirited Away*, which won an Oscar for best animation. Five of the top ten movies are not in English.

The BFI wants to encourage parents and schools to treat film as a serious scholastic subject, on a par with literature and art. It also highlights the fact that films are a part of children's heritage and are something that people passionately care about. The top-50 list is intended to promote the movies that children should see rather than those they shouldn't. The BFI website points out that: "most public debate about children's film viewing focuses on protection rather than entitlement." The website also notes some shortcomings of the list: "Points of possible contention include...the relative lack of cultural diversity and the preponderance of boys as central characters."

Source: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/education/events/watchthis/>

## WARM-UPS

**1. CHILDREN'S MOVIES:** This is a list from the British Film Institute of the top ten recommended children's movies. Talk about the list and the movies. Are there any children's movies that are not on the list that should be?

- Bicycle Thieves (Italy - 1948)
- ET (US - 1982)
- Kes (UK - 1969)
- Spirited Away (Japan - 2001)
- Toy Story (US - 1995)
- Les Quatre Cents Coups (France - 1959)
- Show Me Love (Sweden/Denmark -1998)
- Where is the Friend's House (Iran - 1987)
- The Night of the Hunter (KUS - 1955)
- The Wizard of Oz (US - 1939)

**2. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think the word "movie" is best. Students B think the word "film" is best. Change partners often.

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Movies / must-sees / top-ten lists / Hollywood / obscure movies / 'ET' / 'Toy Story' / 'Spirited Away' / literature / children's heritage / boys as central characters*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. KIDS' MOVIES:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with kids' movies. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. SCHOOL CURRICULUM:** In pairs / groups, rank the following subjects that may be introduced into the curriculum for fourteen-year olds. Put the most important subject at the top.

- Movies
- Internet Studies
- Sexual Equality
- Racism Studies
- World Religion
- The History of Art
- Bible / Koran / Torah / etc. Studies
- Basic Cooking
- Personal Finance
- Sexual Health

Change partners and compare your rankings.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. A children's Internet site has listed 50 all-time great kids' movies. | T / F |
| b. More than 70 eminent film critics helped compile the list.            | T / F |
| c. All of the movies are Hollywood blockbusters.                         | T / F |
| d. All of the movies are in English.                                     | T / F |
| e. It is suggested that movies should be part of the school curriculum.  | T / F |
| f. Movies are a part of children's heritage.                             | T / F |
| g. The list is largely about protecting children from bad influences.    | T / F |
| h. Girls are the central characters in most of the movies.               | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. must-see      | dispute           |
| b. compiled      | distinguished     |
| c. eminent       | heap              |
| d. eclectic      | failings          |
| e. pile          | diverse           |
| f. scholastic    | equal             |
| g. on a par      | essential viewing |
| h. shortcomings  | prevalence        |
| i. contention    | academic          |
| j. preponderance | put together      |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. a must-see                  | array of...              |
| b. a survey of more than 70    | children's heritage      |
| c. The result is an eclectic   | with literature and art  |
| d. and more obscure            | eminent movie critics    |
| e. top of                      | shortcomings of the list |
| f. on a par                    | the pile                 |
| g. films are a part of         | for under-14-year olds   |
| h. The website also notes some | of cultural diversity    |
| i. Points of possible          | releases                 |
| j. the relative lack           | contention include...    |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

### The 50 must-see children's films

**BNE:** The British Film Institute (BFI) has \_\_\_\_\_ a list of 50 movies that are a must-see for under-14-year olds. The list was \_\_\_\_\_ from a survey of more than 70 \_\_\_\_\_ movie critics, who were asked to \_\_\_\_\_ their ten most recommended children's movies from around the world. The result is an eclectic \_\_\_\_\_ of familiar Hollywood blockbusters, such as *ET* and *Toy Story*, and more \_\_\_\_\_ releases such as *Where is the Friend's House*, an Iranian movie released in 1987. The film that came top of the \_\_\_\_\_ is Hayao Miyazaki's 2001 movie *Spirited Away*, which won an Oscar for best \_\_\_\_\_. Five of the top ten movies are not in English.

The BFI wants to encourage parents and schools to \_\_\_\_\_ film as a serious scholastic subject, on a \_\_\_\_\_ with literature and art. It also highlights the fact that films are a part of children's \_\_\_\_\_ and are something that people passionately \_\_\_\_\_ about. The top-50 list is intended to \_\_\_\_\_ the movies that children should see rather than those they shouldn't. The BFI website points out that: "most public debate about children's film viewing focuses on protection rather than \_\_\_\_\_." The website also notes some \_\_\_\_\_ of the list: "Points of possible \_\_\_\_\_ include...the relative lack of cultural diversity and the preponderance of boys as central characters."

*submit*

*animation*

*eminent*

*released*

*obscure*

*pile*

*compiled*

*array*

*promote*

*treat*

*shortcomings*

*heritage*

*par*

*contention*

*entitlement*

*care*

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'movie'** and **'critic'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "KIDS' MOVIES" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about children's movies.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| • released | • treat         |
| • eminent  | • heritage      |
| • world    | • promote       |
| • obscure  | • debate        |
| • pile     | • shortcomings  |
| • English  | • preponderance |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of compiling a list of must-see movies?
- d. Are you surprised five of the top ten are not in English?
- e. Have you seen or would you like to see the four movies mentioned in the first paragraph?
- f. How have kids' movies changed over the years?
- g. Do you prefer Hollywood kids' movies or non-American ones?
- h. Does your country produce wonderful children's movies?
- i. Do you think girls will ever overtake boys as the movie hero?
- j. What was the first movie you saw at the cinema?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What is your favorite kids' movie?
- d. Don't you think children would become fat if they watched 50 movies?
- e. What makes a good children's movie?
- f. Do you think children's movies are getting better?
- g. Would you prefer to see more kids' movies that have real people in them rather than computer graphics?
- h. Do you think movies should be studied at school?
- i. Do you think movies are an important part of a child's heritage?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

**MOVIE CENSOR:** You are a censor for children's movies. In pairs decide on the kinds of scenes (listed below) that are appropriate for 12 – 14-year olds.

SCENES	ZERO	ONE OR TWO SHORT SCENES IS OK	EVERY 10 MINUTES IS OK	SAME AS ADULT MOVIES
Kissing				
Blood				
Shooting with guns				
Foul language				
Nudity				
Views of dead bodies				
Sex scenes				
Violence				
Scenes of drug use				
Scenes depicting homosexuality				
Scenes of bullying				

Change partners and share what you discussed earlier.



## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### The 50 must-see children's films

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The BFI wants to encourage parents and schools \_\_\_\_\_ as a serious scholastic subject, on \_\_\_\_\_ literature and art. It also highlights the fact that films are a part of children's \_\_\_\_\_ and are something that people passionately care about. The top-50 list is \_\_\_\_\_ promote the movies that children should see rather than those they shouldn't. The BFI website points out that: "most \_\_\_\_\_ about children's film viewing focuses on protection rather than \_\_\_\_\_." The website also notes some shortcomings of the list: "Points of possible contention include...the relative lack of cultural diversity and the \_\_\_\_\_ of boys as central characters."

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on the British Film Institute and children's movies. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. MY FAVORITE:** Make a poster on your favorite children's movie. Provide a summary of the story and highlight what makes it great for kids. Show your poster to your classmates in your next lesson.

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to the head of the British Film Institute. Tell him / her what movies you think are missing from the top-50 list and why you think they should be included. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson.

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. F      d. F      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. must-see	essential viewing
b. compiled	put together
c. eminent	distinguished
d. eclectic	diverse
e. pile	heap
f. scholastic	academic
g. on a par	equal
h. shortcomings	failings
i. contention	dispute
j. preponderance	prevalence

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. a must-see	for under-14-year olds
b. a survey of more than 70	eminent movie critics
c. The result is an eclectic	array of...
d. and more obscure	releases
e. top of	the pile
f. on a par	with literature and art
g. films are a part of	children's heritage
h. The website also notes some	shortcomings of the list
i. Points of possible	contention include...
j. the relative lack	of cultural diversity

### GAP FILL:

#### The 50 must-see children's films

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