

That's Probably Going to Be a Rental



» Lesson Objective

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to **decide whether to see a movie based on a written review.**

» Expression Check

- I totally recommend seeing this movie, and I give it four stars.
- It didn't quite live up to all the hype.
- Save your money and wait for the DVD release.

1. Warm Up Activity

Talk about the questions.

1. Would you consider yourself a movie fanatic?
2. What are the different forums we can use to get information about movie releases?
3. What was the last movie you saw at the theater?

2. Language Note

Check out slang and idioms and practice useful expressions.

Slang and Idioms

- a) **Two thumbs up** : an expression used to show total satisfaction with something
- b) **A bomb** : a movie that received a lot of hype but did poorly at the box office
- c) **Chick flick** : a movie tailored toward women
- d) **Blockbuster** : a movie that is expected to do really well at the box office

Useful Expressions

1. This movie is getting all kinds of hype prior to its release.
2. Save your time and make this one a weekend rental.
3. This movie has Oscar written all over it – a definite must-see.
4. If you're planning to watch anything on the silver screen this year, put this one on your list.

Role-play


Act out the role-play using the slang and idioms and useful expressions.

Situation

You and your partner are movie critics on television. You are giving a review for one of the latest movies, and you absolutely love it. However, your partner is not on the same page with your review.



3. Key Conversation

 Practice the dialogue and talk about the questions.

Should I See It or Not?

- Jeffery** Well, the weekend is just around the corner, and I have absolutely no idea what I'm doing. Isn't that pathetic?
- Steve** If you're looking to do something, the next installment of the Spiderman series opens this weekend.
- Jeffery** Is that right? I haven't heard a single word about it. What's the word on the street about this one?
- Steve** I glanced over a couple of reviews online the other day. One of the reviews totally recommended it and gave it four stars.
- Jeffery** What about the other one? Was it as complimentary as the first one?
- Steve** Not in the least. It said it didn't live up to all its hype and you should just save your money and wait for the DVD release.
- Jeffery** I'm not sure what to do. I liked the other Spiderman movies, so if that's any indication, I guess I should see it.
- Steve** If I were you, I'd go see it. Does anyone really believe what movie critics have to say anyway?
- Jeffery** Yeah, you're right. So, do you want to come with me on Saturday to see it?
- Steve** Um...I'm not sure right now. Let me get back to you on that.

Questions

1. Do you think Steve made a good suggestion to Jeffery?
2. Do you think Steve will go to see the movie with Jeffery?

There Are Too Many Rating Systems! Which One Is the Best Movie Review Rating System?

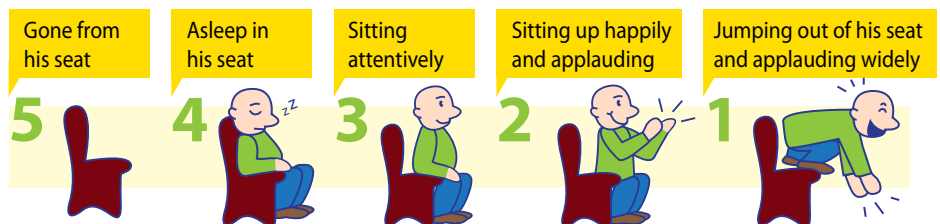
More than 80 years ago, Hollywood's star system was created as a method of rating movies by giving each a certain number of stars.

The most popular system uses five stars. In this system, three would be right in the middle. However, when equating that to percentages, three equals 60%. How can 60% be right in the middle?

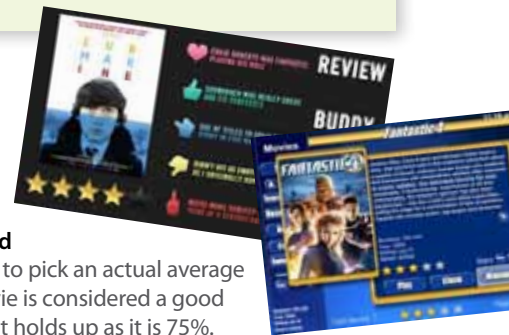
The ten-star system is also popular system. It is typically an accurate percentage, but its main problem arises from psychology. With so many apparent choices, it is easy for a movie to be rated badly. A 5 out of 10 almost sounds like a bad movie when, in fact, it is just average.

The four-star rating system allowing half-stars is considered to be the most widely used movie rating system because it allows people to pick an actual average and is psychologically sound. A three-star movie is considered a good movie. When converting this to a percentage, it holds up as it is 75%.

However, the rating system that makes the most sense is the San Francisco Chronicle's "Little Man," who is seen...



- Q.** How often do you rate movies? If you give ratings, what rating system would be perfect for you to use?



Five Factors for Creating a Box Office Hit

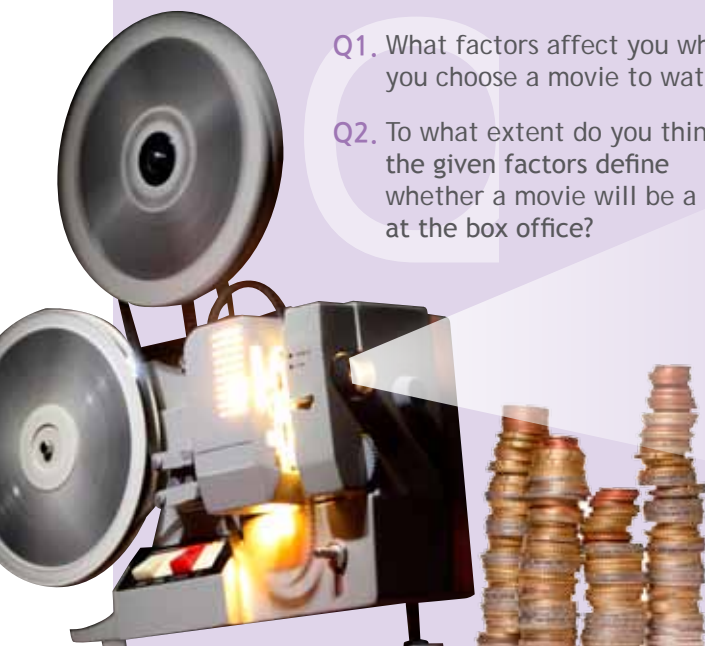
Producing films is one of the riskiest businesses. A “mega-project” movie can cost up to \$270 million and take years to produce. To justify this investment, the mega-project movie has to make its way to the top 5 of the box office for the year.

Significant Factors

- **Distribution is key.** In order to break even, a movie must make it into a large number of theaters.
- **Opening weekend success is important.** Opening weekend performance is already widely used in the industry to predict success.
- **High budget means high risk.** Again, supporting industry wisdom, we find that high budgets, while they potentially offer higher reward, are less likely to break even from box office sales.
- **Quality still counts.** Quality (as measured by IMDB (the Internet Movie Data Base) rating) improves the chance to break even.
- **Seek the season.** Being a summer or Christmas release (when there are more moviegoers and fewer competing movies) helps.

Q1. What factors affect you when you choose a movie to watch?

Q2. To what extent do you think the given factors define whether a movie will be a hit at the box office?



4. What Would You Do?

I Can't Believe You Suggested This

As the weekend approaches, you suggest your best friend to see a new movie that has just been released. You made this decision because of the reviews the critics have given the movie. After the movie, your friend tells you he hated the movie. As a result, he insists that you should have to treat him to another movie of his choice.

What would you do in this situation?

5. Cultural Discussion Questions

Read the passage and talk about the questions in as much detail as possible.

At the Movies

Siskel and Ebert and The Movies

was a movie review television program that ran from 1988 to 1996 in America and Canada. In the show, two film critics shared their at times dramatically different opinions of newly released movies. The original hosts, **Roger Ebert** of the Chicago Sun-Times and **Gene Siskel** of the Chicago Tribune, would either give the newly released movie a thumbs-up or a thumbs-down review. Viewers of this program took their advice quite seriously when determining the movies they would or would not see.



1. In your country, are there any famous movie critics that people listen to for movie reviews?
2. Do your opinions about movies usually match those of a movie critic?



Can My Kids Watch This Movie?

What Is the Purpose of the Rating System?

The Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) and the Classification and Rating Appeals Board were established by the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) and the National Association of Theater Owners, Inc. (NATO) as part of a voluntary system to provide information to aid parents in determining the suitability of individual motion pictures for viewing by their children.

G

The Motion Picture contains nothing that would offend parents for viewing by their children.

PG

Parents are urged to use "Parental Guidance," as the Motion Picture may contain some material parents might not like for their younger children to view.

PG-13

Parents are urged to be cautious. Some material may be inappropriate for pre-teenagers.

R

Contains some adult material. Parents are urged to learn more about the Motion Picture before taking their younger children with them.

Generally, it is not appropriate for parents to bring their young children with them to R-rated Motion Pictures.

NC-17

Patently adult. Children are not admitted.



Q. Do you have a similar rating system in your country? What does it look like?

6. If You Ask Me

Read the discussion topic and select the statement that you believe in the most. Then role-play the scenario.

Opinions Are Everywhere

In this day and age of mass media, there are so many different ways to preview movies before they come out. Some would argue that the opinions expressed by movie critics are not worth the time of day as it really boils down to one's own opinion. Others claim that the best way to get information about a newly released movie is to get opinions from close friends with similar movie tastes.

Topic Question Are the opinions made by movie critics worth more or less than the opinions made by a close friend?

Supportive Opinion

VS

Non-Supportive Opinion

Wrapping Up!

Tell four things that you learned from this lesson and review.

1.

2.

3.

4.