**Assessment Task for Speaking**

**Topic: Films and Cinema**

This assessment task focuses on developing senior secondary students’ speaking skills.

This set of materials consists of Question Paper and Suggested Answers.

**Speaking Task: Films and Cinema**

**Part A Group Discussion**

Your local cinema is showing the films below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Name of film** | **Synopsis** | **Film type** |
| **House 1** | **The Broken Mirror** | Twin brothers, one a police detective and the other a crime boss, both love and hate one another. | Action, crime |
| **House 2** | **Confusions of Love** | Six friends falling in and out of love. Alternately sad and funny. | Romance, music, everyday life, humour |
| **House 3** | **Home from Hell** | Moving into a new flat can be scary when the neighbours are so strange and a black cat keeps appearing out of nowhere. Does the building have secrets? | Japanese horror |

Your group comprise the committee of a film club and is discussing the latest films above.

You may want to talk about:

* what sort of people are likely to enjoy each film above
* what sorts of film are popular nowadays in Hong Kong
* what the pleasures of going to the cinema are
* anything else you think is important

**Part B Individual Response**

1. What is your own favourite type of film?
2. What films have you seen recently?
3. Do you like going to the cinema? Why/Why not?
4. Where and how do you usually watch films?
5. What are a few of your all-time favourite films?
6. What cartoons have you enjoyed?
7. Do you think films are useful for language learning? Why and how, or why not? What are the things which make a film good?

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

**Suggested Ideas for Group Interaction and Individual Response**

**Part A Group Interaction**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| Audience  | * The Broken Mirror : Teens, males
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|  | * Confusions of Love: Young adults, dating couples, females
 |
|  | * Home from Hell: Teens, groups of friends, young adult males
 |
| Films popular now | * (depends on current trend)
* Martial arts/historical drama, musical, superheroes, animations, 3-D, etc.
 |
| Pleasures of the cinema | * Big screen, good sound, possibly 3-D
* Good stories
* Chases, fights, special effects
* Sound track music
* Snacks such as pop-corn
* Sitting in the dark concentrating only on the film
* Social activity- groups of friends relaxing, being scared, etc. together
* Emotional release
* Good acting
* Seeing favourite stars
* Grand views, cinematography
 |
| Anything else  | * Cost
* Local versus other types of cinema (South Korean, Hollywood, etc.)
* Convenience of watching at home (pausing, etc.)
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**Part B Individual Responses**

1. What is your own favourite type of film?

*I like all sorts of films- anything which makes me laugh is good and there are some brilliant cartoons from Japan or Pixar. I’m not much of a fan of horror films, though sometimes a ghost film is interesting. I suppose overall my favourite type is Chinese history films with some fantasy added. I love stories with ancient powerful swords. You know, the sort of thing you get in Jin Yong- his novels are great. Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon is one of my all time favourite films- the fight in the bamboo forest is brilliant. Red Cliff was great too- and of course Seven Swords. The costumes, action and special effects are all great. House of Flying Dragons and Hero are other ones I love- and we mustn’t forget Kung Fu Panda!*

1. What films have you seen recently?

*Recently I rewatched the Harry Potter films. They are so good. The early ones like Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone are very cute with that awful family where he stays, but then the films get more exciting until the two Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows films are really dark and at times frightening. The story is the great attraction but the film’s special effects are also wonderful. Hogwarts is such an interesting school- I wish my school were more like it- the weird pictures and moving staircases are fabulous- and I enjoy watching the games of quidditch. I love Hagrid- such a good friend to Harry, and his animals like Fluffy the monster dog- and there are lots of amazing minor characters- the strange teachers, the ghost in the toilet who’s always crying, and adorable Dobby. They are really great films.*

1. Do you like going to the cinema? Why/Why not?

*Yes, I do. First, you have to choose a film that will be really good on the big screen and then you have to get together a group of good friends. You go to the cinema, choose some good seats and then buy snacks. A big cup of popcorn and a giant coke are best. Then you go to the right screen and settle down. I love the atmosphere- and when it goes dark you aren’t in the ordinary world any more. You move into the world of the movie- you are riding across ancient China or flying in space or chasing gangsters. Everything else becomes unimportant. You have all sorts of emotions- fear, sadness, laughter, excitement and so on. And then the film ends and you all go out again into the real world and head for a café to talk about the film, remember the best bits, asks questions about things you didn’t understand and laugh at any funny bits.*

1. Where and how do you usually watch films?

*I go to the cinema with friends but only about once a month. That’s best for special effects blockbusters and 3-D films. Then I watch quite a lot on television- that’s a sort of family event when we all sit round and enjoy a good film together. Mum brings in snacks and we all laugh or get scared or excited together and of course make comments about the film as we watch! I’ll also sometimes watch a film on television when I’m at home alone. But the way I usually watch films is on my own on my computer in my own room. It’s nice to share a film but I think it’s even better to have nothing to distract you- then if it’s a good film, you can really enter into the story and forget the outside world. I’m a big fan of science fiction films and enjoy just letting my imagination loose to travel among aliens and sail across galaxies.*

1. What are a few of your all-time favourite films?

*There are so many. The three Infernal Affairs films are marvellous- the plot is clever and the psychology of the characters really interesting. I like almost any Andy Lau film but here he’s at his best. I can easily repeat some of the dialogue as it’s so good. I also love the McDull films- so funny and also so true- there are days I feel so like him. And the Cantonese word play is so funny. For cuteness maybe Finding Nemo should go on my list. The Star Wars films are cool though they look a bit old nowadays- still the story’s great and all the different types of aliens are fun to watch. When I was younger I really wanted an Ewok of my own! I watch the Lord of the Rings films once every year- there’s so much in them that I notice new things every time. I don’t think I’ll ever get tired of them.*

1. What cartoons have you enjoyed?

*Well, there are plenty of Japanese ones I love, but I don’t think I can talk about them in English so I will keep to Hollywood cartoons. The Shrek films are all brilliant. Donkey just makes me laugh so much. They always have good music too. I love the Ice Ages series too. Manny the mammoth is so sweet and having the fierce tiger look after the baby is good fun. Best of all is crazy Scat and his acorn. Crash and Eddie are endlessly funny too. Mulan and Lion King are classics I have watched many times. I loved Toy Story when I was younger. Thinking of television cartoons, almost everyone enjoys The Simpsons- Bart is such a terrible person! Of more recent cartoons I admire Rango- he’s so cool as he handles the people of Dirt! There’s really no better way of filling any spare time you’ve got than watching cartoons!*

1. Do you think films are useful for language learning? Why and how, or why not?

*I think it’s rather a shame to watch a film for any reason other than to get into the story and enjoy it- you can’t be thinking about language or grammar and vocabulary when you are doing that. However, even though I don’t watch films with the intention of improving my English or Mandarin, I do find I do learn quite a lot. With Mandarin films I have the Chinese sub-titles on so I can understand even Mandarin expressions I don’t know and that way I learn them. With English language films I usually have the English captions on so I can read and listen, but even if the language is too hard or too slangy for me and I have to have Chinese sub-titles, I find I pick up all sorts of phrases from the sound track. Of course, not all are very formal English so I have to be careful about where I use words learned from movie gangsters!*

1. What are the things which make a film good?

*There’re quite a few, aren’t there? You need a good story- a plot that makes sense and an ending which satisfies. The characters must be interesting and the actors must bring them to life convincingly so you can feel their emotions and care about what happens to them. Of course, it’s nice if the film has some stars who you recognise and like. The script has to be good so you don’t start laughing at what someone says at a serious moment. A good sound track with some memorable film music is also important. Other things depend on what type of film it is- cartoons must have good animation, science fiction films need good special effects, crime films need great chases and shoot outs, and martial arts films need incredible stunts. Then there are the technical things like lighting, costume, and camerawork. You may not notice those, but if they aren’t right, the film won’t please you.*

**END OF SUGGESTED ANSWERS**