

SPEAK ENGLISH WITH VANESSA. MOVIES. TRANSCRIPT

Hi, I'm Vanessa from SpeakEnglishWithVanessa.com.

Do you like to watch movies and TV shows? Do you know how to describe them in English? Let's talk about it. If you like watching movies and TV shows, you're in the right place.

Honestly, I don't really enjoy watching them, but I do enjoy helping you with English, so it's my pleasure to share this lesson with you.

A popular topic in conversation is talking about the latest movies or maybe the latest TV show. So today I want to help you describe TV shows and movies naturally in English.

Before we get started, I want you to think about your favourite movie or maybe your favourite TV show. As I talk about different ways to describe movies and TV shows, I want you to be thinking about how you can describe that movie or TV show.

Because at the end of the lesson I'm going to ask you to write a comment describing your favourite movie or TV show so you can prepare throughout this lesson and think about the different sentences that you can use.

Let's get started by talking about seven different types of movies.

If someone has never heard of your favourite movie, you need to start by giving it a type or a genre. So you might say it's an action movie. A typical type of action movie is a superhero movie like Superman, Spider-man, The Avengers. These types of things are action movies, or you might say it's a comedy. Some popular comedies are Mean Girls, Mr. Bean, or one of my personal favourites, Ferris Bueller's Day Off. You should check it out. It's a classic. There are some words we use to describe comedies because not all comedies are the same type of humour. So you might say it's slapstick humour or it's a slapstick comedy. That means they use a lot of physical humour like Mr. Bean. It's physical humour, not verbal humour, or you might say it's a parody, so that means it's making fun of something else or another concept, or it might be a romcom. This is short for romantic comedy, you often say it's a romcom or it's a chick flick. Chick is a slang term for women and often women more than men like romcoms, like chick flicks, so if you're talking about a movie, you might say,

"Yeah, it's a chick flick, but I still like it,"

or,

"It's a chick flick. Yeah, it's pretty good."

So you could use those terms to describe different types of comedies.

I think the biggest category of movies is drama or suspense. It could be like historical fiction. It could be a biography. It could be a mystery. Some popular movies like this are movies, older movies made by Alfred Hitchcock. Those are classics. I recommend them. Or it might be Pride and Prejudice, Titanic, Into the Wild, Forrest Gump, The Terminal, Edward Scissorhands. All of these are drama or suspense.

The fourth category is horror, fantasy, sci-fi. I know there's a lot of differences here, but I just put them all together because they all include some level of imagination beyond reality. Some popular movies that fit into these categories are Minority Report, E.T., Star Wars, The Prestige, Avatar. All of these fit into that category.

When I was growing up, I really enjoyed watching musicals. A lot of these are older. They might be Wizard of Oz, The Sound of Music, or it could be more modern like a movie called La La Land. All of these feature music and the actors are singing as an essential part of the plot.

The sixth type of movie are westerns. These are, I imagine, more popular in the US than elsewhere, but if you've ever seen a Clint Eastwood movie, these are westerns. They were popular or they were

mostly made during the '50s to '70s, and some top westerns include High Noon, which is one of my favourites, or The Magnificent Seven. These are some classic American movies.

The final category of movies are children's movies. There are two types of children's movies. You could say it's an animated children's movie like Toy Story or Totoro, or it might be live action like Harry Potter or The Sandlot. That means that it's not featuring drawings. It's featuring real people. So there's two types, and you could use this for other categories as well. It's an animated film or it's a live action movie. These types of words.

If you'd like to watch three movies that help you learn more about American culture. I made a movie about my top three movies up here so that you can gain a deeper insight into American culture and movies are a great way to do that.

Next, I'd like to talk about some different categories of things that you might talk about in movies. The first one is the trailer. You could say they gave away everything in the trailer. To give away everything means that they told too much of the story in the trailer and maybe they spoiled some important points. Or you might say Toy Story is coming out on May 1st, 2020. Or Toy Story is going to be released on May 1st, 2020. I don't know if that's actually true. I just made that up. But that means that it is the first time that you can see the movie. That's when it's going to come out. Usually come out in theaters. You could say it's going to come out in theaters on May 1st next year.

Excellent. There are a lot of expressions that we can use to talk about the plot of a movie. This means the story of the movie, but we use the word plot to talk about what happens during a movie. Or of course a TV show, but I'm just saying movie because it's simple to just say one of those. So you might start by saying The Terminal takes place in JFK Airport or The Terminal is set in JFK Airport. That means that the location of the movie is in JFK Airport. Even though this movie is set in the JFK airport, they didn't film it there. The terminal was filmed in LA.

For some movies there are special effects. So you could say Titanic is filled with really cool special effects, or in my opinion, the dialogue in the Titanic is a little weak. This means that the things that they say, the dialogue, isn't normal or natural or convincing. It was a little bit shallow and that's just an opinion. On the other hand, the score is incredible. I used to listen to it all the time. The score means the music, the music in the Titanic is really capturing and you can just picture exactly what's happening. So, even if you weren't a big fan of certain parts of a movie, you could say,

"Well, the score was absolutely incredible. They did a great job."

Have you ever watched Avatar? It's two and a half hours long, which is ridiculously long for a movie. But for me, when I watched Avatar, even though it was two and a half hours, I was on the edge of my seat. You can picture sitting on the edge of your seat because you want to know what's going to happen next. You're not sitting back and bored. You're tense and ready to know what's happening next. I was on the edge of my seat.

Talking about the plot. You might say the premise of High Noon is simple, but the plot keeps your attention. Here the premise is the general idea. So the general idea is that at noon some bad guys are coming to the city and the sheriff has to fight them. Simple idea, not too complex, but it's the action or the plot or the characters, whatever you choose, that keeps your attention. It might not be a super complex premise or idea of the whole story, but that action keeps your attention.

Have you ever seen a Mr. Bean movie? They're always hilarious. At least it's my type of humour, but because Mr. Bean movies don't have much dialogue, they aren't hard to follow. To follow means to understand the plot, understand what's going on. You can just watch and you can see exactly what he's doing. It's easy to follow. On the other hand, you might say,

"That was so complicated. I couldn't follow it."

I couldn't follow it means I had no idea what was happening. It was way too complicated.

If you watch a movie in another language, they might be dubbed or they might have subtitles. If you have never watched a Miyazaki movie, these are animated Japanese movies for children, but also for adults. And when I watch these movies, say like Totoro. Totoro is one of the most popular. When I watch Totoro, I want to watch it with subtitles because when you watch it dubbed, this means that you're hearing English voices and you're not hearing the original Japanese voices. I feel like it loses some of the magic because you're listening to it in a language that isn't the original and maybe that's why you're wanting to watch movies and TV shows in English so they can get that original sense for it.

So I'm curious, in your country, are movies often dubbed? You're hearing your native language even though the actors aren't speaking your native language, they might be speaking another language. Are they dubbed or do they usually have subtitles? And what do you prefer? I have this sentiment a lot, Into the Wild was an okay movie, but the book was better. If you read the book before you watch the movie, you will almost always feel like this. It might be a common expression for you to use. The book was better. Almost always true across the board. The book was better. Or I can't believe that they cut out my favourite parts of the book. Most movies are based on books, so if you read the book, you know everything about the story and you might be disappointed if the director decides to cut out or take out or not include some important parts that you liked from the book. I can't believe that they cut out my favourite part of the book.

Now that we've talked about the trailer and the plot, what about the ending? There are a lot of great expressions you can use to talk about the ending. For example, you might say there is a big twist at the end of The Prestige. I won't spoil it for you. There's a twist. That means there is a surprise that happens at the end of the movie The Prestige, and I'm not going to tell you about it because I don't want to spoil it or I don't want to spoil it for you.

If someone is telling you about a movie and you think they might give away some things about the plot that you don't want to know yet because you haven't seen it, you could say,

"Wait, wait, wait, wait. Don't spoil it for me. Let me watch the movie myself. Don't spoil it."

Or if you're disappointed in a movie, you might say,

"Titanic was pretty good, but the ending just ruined it for me."

Ruined it means the movie. It means the movie was ruined because of the ending. There was definitely room for Jack on that piece of wood. What were they thinking? So for you, if you're disappointed in the ending, you might say,

"Ugh, the ending just ruined it for me."

A simple expression, you might use is just,

"In the end, the good guys win and the bad guys lose."

This is a general idea. In the end, this is what happens. Another way to talk about the ending is the climax. This is when there's the most suspense. You might say the climax in most Alfred Hitchcock movies, which are older, amazing suspense movies that I really recommend. The climax of most Alfred Hitchcock movies is when the audience thinks they know what's going to happen, but the characters don't know.

So you're sitting there watching and saying,

"No, don't go into that room. You know what's in that? No, don't go in there."

Because we know what's going to happen, but they have no idea, so there's a lot of suspense that's built.

Next. Let's talk about how to describe the characters in the movie or the actors themselves. You could say the movie Love Actually has a star-studded cast, but I wasn't a big fan of the movie. When there are a lot of famous people in a movie, you could say a star-studded cast because someone who's famous is a star. It's a star-studded cast.

Brad Pitt had a cameo role or a guest appearance on the TV show Friends. He made a brief appearance, maybe for one episode or just one scene in the TV show friends, a cameo role or a guest appearance. They mean the same thing.

The main characters in Harry Potter are now internationally famous. If you talk about Harry, Ron, Hermione or even some of the other main characters, most people know who these are and they can connect them with Harry Potter.

Star Wars has a lot of supporting actors, because they visit so many different planets and so many different places. Supporting actors aren't the main actors, but they're still important for keeping the plot moving, for making sense of that world. They're the supporting actors.

If you've never seen the amazing musical The Sound of Music, I would definitely say to you, I can't believe you've never seen The Sound of Music. It stars one of my favourite actresses, Julie Andrews, or you could say,

"Have you seen the movie with Julie Andrews?"

She's the actress, so it doesn't mean that you went to the movie theater with her. It just means that there is a movie that features her. She is the star of that movie and it is absolutely incredible.

The music brings me back to a great place in my childhood and I still love singing it today.

We talked about main characters, supporting actors. What about people who are in a movie but they don't have a speaking role, they're just kind of in the background?

You could say,

"My brother-in-law was an extra in an Emma Watson movie."

That's true. He just was in the movie because they were filming in his city and they needed people to be in the background and he thought,

"Okay, I'll make a little money for one day and just be in the background of this movie."

So he was an extra in the movie. There are a lot of people involved in movies who aren't actors. For example, Steven Spielberg directed Schindler's List or we could switch that sentence and say Schindler's List was directed by Steven Spielberg, another excellent movie. Now let's talk about sequels or series. There's often more than one of a movie that seems to be kind of the trend nowadays.

If there's one movie, there's probably going to be a sequel and maybe there'll be more in the future. So let's talk about how you can use that. Star Wars has several sequels and prequels. Here we need this prefix sequel or pre, pre means before. So a sequel comes after and a prequel comes before. So we have the original movies and some of them take place afterwards and some of them take place before. It doesn't matter which order they were filmed in. But this is the chronological order of the universe or of the story. Lord of the Rings is a trilogy. Trilogy. Here the prefix is tri or tri and that means three. So there are three movies in Lord of the Rings. There are plenty of other trilogies. This is kind of a common concept for telling a complex story or maybe telling a simple story, but drawing it out so that they get more money from people watching more movies. And there are often trilogies for a story.

It seems like Disney has been making some remakes recently of some of their classic movies like The Lion King, The Jungle Book, these classic animated movies they are remaking. So you could say,

"I loved the original, but I didn't really like the remake."

Or you could say,

"I loved the original and I thought I wouldn't like the remake, but it was actually pretty good."

It's the original and the remake. And finally, let's talk about the reception of a movie. This means how it was perceived by audiences, how much money it made, how well it did. You could say for the movie Forrest Gump.

"Forrest Gump was a hit from the moment it came out."

To be a hit means that everyone loved it. It was instantly popular and famous. It was a hit. You can use this expression actually for other things as well. Same as some of the other expressions we talked about, but let's say that you bake a birthday cake for your friend. You bake this amazing chocolate birthday cake and you bring it to her party and everyone loves it.

You could say,

"I'm so glad that my cake was a hit."

It was instantly loved. What's the opposite of a hit?

You could say that,

"Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory was a box office bomb in 1971."

This is the original Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. Not the one with Johnny Depp. That's the remake. But you could say,

"It was a box office bomb."

Or you could say,

"It was a flop."

It made no money. There was a lot of hype and excitement about the movie and then when it came out ... people didn't really like it. It was a flop or it was a box office bomb. That was a lot of expressions, right? Well, now you are armed and prepared to talk about movies and TV shows in daily conversation, right?

I want to give you a chance to practice. In the comments, I want you to tell me about your favourite movie and TV show. Use some of these expressions that you learned today to give it more depth and detail. You can talk about the trailer or maybe the plot or the characters or the reception, but don't spoil it for me. Don't tell me the ending. You can also read other people's comments to get some good suggestions about movies that you should watch. It'll be a great way to expand your knowledge. Thank you so much for learning English with me and I'll see you again next Friday for a new lesson here on my YouTube channel.

Bye.

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