

"The artist"

teaching notes

ACTIVITY

Students read about *The Artist*, a new silent film. They then create their own silent film.

GRAMMAR/VOCABULARY

Cinema
Describing things and actions

LEVEL

A2 and above

TIME



POSSIBLE VOCABULARY

audition
bow
extra
intertitles
music score
nomination
paparazzi
purse

Picture credits
Warner Brothers

WHAT TO DO

Optional introduction: Use mime to explain to the students that you have lost your voice and can't speak. Encourage them to describe what you are miming. Use mime to explain that last night you were singing in a choir. When you woke up this morning, you had lost your voice. Have any of your students seen your voice anywhere? Pretend that you find your voice and can speak again.

1. Make copies of the first activity page and cut it in half. Divide the class into pairs (Student A and Student B). Tell the students that you are going to give each of them a short text. Each student in the pair will have a different version of the text which they mustn't show their partner. There are some words missing from the texts and some words in bold. (Check meaning of **bold**.)

The students have to take it in turn to explain the words in bold to their partner so that their partner can write the missing words in their text. The catch is that they cannot speak. They have to explain the missing words using only mime. Demonstrate the activity by asking the Student Bs to mime their first missing word (*film*). Then ask the Student As to mime their first missing word (*silent*). Students do the activity in pairs.

2. When they finish, ask the students to describe their picture to their partner. Then invite some students to share their descriptions with the class. Help with any new or problem vocabulary.


3. Make copies of the second activity page and cut it in half. Cut out all the text boxes and keep them for later. Divide the class into small groups and give each group a set of pictures. (You can cut them out if you prefer.) Students in the group take it in turn to describe one of the photographs. The other students in the group have to identify the picture the student is describing. Students repeat the activity until they have described all the pictures. Encourage students to ask you if they don't know how to describe something.

4. Tell the students that you are going to give them parts of the story from the film. The first thing you want them to do is match each text with one of the pictures. Give a set of texts to each group and let them do the activity. Check answers. Then ask the students to put the story into the correct order. Check answers.

5. Find out if any of your students have seen *The Artist*. If they have, what did they think of it? If they haven't, do they want to see it or not? Why or why not?

6. Explain that some film experts predict that there will be more silent films in the future. Still working in groups, ask the students to agree on a recent or famous film that they have seen and to prepare a silent scene from the film. They are going to perform their silent scene to the rest of the class who have to guess which film it is.

7. Students prepare their silent scenes and then perform them for the rest of the class. Encourage the other students to describe what is happening in each scene. Can they identify the films?

 Subscribers can download this activity in a version to project onto a whiteboard from the its-teachers website.

http://www.its-teachers.com/activities/its122/09_the_artist.asp

For more activities related to films, go to the its-english website (www.its-english.com) or see the *It's Movies* activity book.



 *it's movies*

ANSWERS

Match the pictures and texts

a VIII
b VII
c II
d IX
e V
f I
g III
h VI
i IV

Order the story

1 V
2 VII
3 IV
4 III
5 I
6 IX
7 VIII
8 VI
9 II



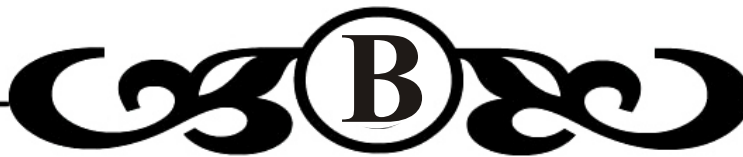
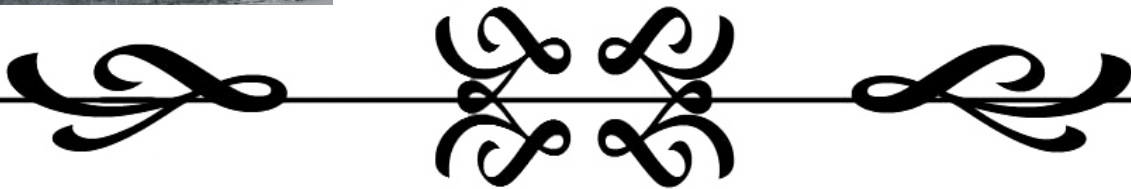
The Artist

Use actions but no words to describe the words in **bold** to your partner. Your partner will use actions to describe your missing words.

The Artist is a French (1) _____. It's a **silent** movie and it was filmed in black-and-white. An (2) _____ plays the music score and there is (almost) no **dialogue**. The story is told using (3) _____ and intertitles. The film's **director**, Michel Hazanavicius, is French as are its two stars, Jean Dujardin and Bérénice Bejo. The film's other star is a (4) _____ called Uggie.

Dujardin won the Best Actor **Award** at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, where the film had its (5) _____. The film has **six** Golden Globe nominations and many film critics predict that it will be the (6) _____ silent film to be nominated for a Best **Picture** Oscar since 1928.

Describe the picture on the left to your partner.



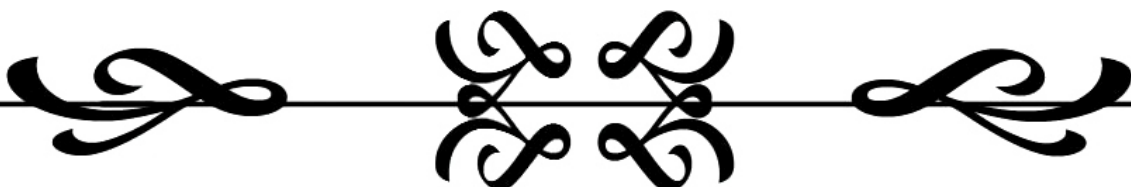
The Artist

Use actions but no words to describe the words in **bold** to your partner. Your partner will use actions to describe your missing words.

The Artist is a French **film**. It's a (1) _____ movie and it was filmed in black-and-white. An **orchestra** plays the music score and there is (almost) no (2) _____. The story is told using **action** and intertitles. The film's (3) _____, Michel Hazanavicius, is French as are its two stars, Jean Dujardin and Bérénice Bejo. The film's other star is a **dog** called Uggie.

Dujardin won the Best Actor (4) _____ at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, where the film had its **premiere**. The film has (5) _____ Golden Globe nominations and many film critics predict that it will be the **first** silent film to be nominated for a Best (6) _____ Oscar since 1928.

Describe the picture on the right to your partner.





She's not happy. On the front page of the paper there's a photograph of her husband being kissed by the young woman.

I

Valentin's career, on the other hand, goes from bad to worse. He takes to drink and spends his time at home, watching his silent movies.

II

At breakfast the next day, Valentin and his dog look across at Valentin's wife, Doris, reading a copy of *Variety*.

III

Outside the movie theatre, Valentin is posing for pictures for the paparazzi when a young woman drops her purse. As she picks it up, she gives her hero a kiss.

IV

It's 1927 and silent movie star George Valentin is backstage at the premiere of his latest film, *A Russian Affair*.

V

Two years pass and everything goes well until the introduction of sound and talking pictures (the *talkies*). Peppy's career takes off and she becomes a big movie star.

VI

When the film ends, Valentin goes onstage to take a bow with his co-star and his performing dog.

VII

At the film studio, she proudly shows the paper to a man. She has come for a job as an extra but soon Valentin discovers her and gives her a part in his new film.

VIII

The young woman's name is Peppy and she wants to be an actress. She's also reading a copy of *Variety* as she takes the bus to an audition at a movie studio.

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