

STEP BEYOND™

Comprehension 5

read
write
publish



Rodney Martin
and Görel Hydén

	About This Book	4
Unit 1	Personal Recount – Anecdote <i>Tale of a Snake</i>	6
Unit 2	Description – A Story Setting <i>Hannah</i>	12
Unit 3	Email – Letter of Complaint <i>One-Stop Toy Shop</i>	18
Unit 4	Style – Imagery and Sounds <i>Sly Tom</i>	24
Unit 5	A Newspaper Advertisement <i>Getabout™ Backpack</i>	30
Unit 6	Movie Review <i>Lost in the Land of Long Ago</i>	36
Unit 7	Narrative – Pourquoi Tale <i>Little Porro</i>	42
Unit 8	Recount – News Article <i>Priceless Paintings Slashed</i>	48
Unit 9	Poetry – Haiku	54
Unit 10	Report <i>The Life Cycle of a Frog</i>	60
Unit 11	Argument – Letter to the Editor <i>Mobile Phones at School?</i>	66
Unit 12	Narrative – Play Script <i>Lost Treasure</i>	72
Unit 13	Procedural Text – Directions <i>Discover Coral Cave</i>	78
Unit 14	Discussion – Magazine Article <i>Personal Health — Two Expert Views</i>	84
Unit 15	Narrative – Suspense <i>The Intruder</i>	90

Lost in the Land of Long Ago

A film by Pelle Rosén

Starring

Horatio Gonzalez, Julia Fine, Pontius Green

"An exceptional film"

Evening News

"Action and excitement"

Entertainment Weekly

"Excellent photography"

*News Morning, TV9***Don't miss the adventure!**

At a Blue Sky Cinema near you.

**Lost Again!**

This second film about the Wall children's adventures begins in the same way as the first. The children are on holiday – the summer holidays this time – and they are bored. They find a mysterious passage that takes them back in time to the age of King Arthur and the knights of the round table, where they become servants in Arthur's court at Camelot and often find themselves in difficult situations among the knights.

The films about the Wall children are based on Kristine Herman's books, which tell historical and literary events more or less correctly. The film, however, does not keep to the historical and literary truth, but mixes it with myths from the script-writer's imagination. For example, Sir Lancelot conquers a dragon in the forest on his way to Camelot! All this is served up in a package that makes you think more of a computer game than a film. True, the computer animation is clever, but it would better suit a fantasy than a mythical tale based on established literature.

If the intention was to create exciting entertainment, then the film's director, Pelle Rosén, has succeeded. The audience is held by a series of roller-coaster rides in the form of knights in races and chases around the castle. This holds you in your chair, but such techniques do not add value to the story.

Actor Horatio Gonzalez, winner of the Grand Gammy Award, once again gives a magnificent performance as King Arthur. He portrays a tough leader, yet also a man of wisdom and intelligence. Not so the actor playing Guinevere (Julia Fine). Fine's performance was not fine at all – so unnatural that the character failed to come to life. I have never been impressed by her acting.

As in many good adventures for children, the action revolves around themes of good and evil, light and darkness. While this is suitable for teenagers, I suggest parental guidance with the adult themes in the film. The violence in the fight scenes makes it unsuitable for very young children.

Anyone who enjoyed the first film will not be disappointed by this sequel, but – as I expected of a film with Julia Fine – it's not my favourite film of the season. It is worth seeing, but not a 'must see'. ★ ★ ★

Jamar Ericson,
Reviewer, 'Weekend Magazine'

Advertisement:
poster

Facts

Opinions

Action

Headline: clever
use of film title

Introduction:
background
information

Criticism of plot
(what happens)

Criticism of
director's skill

Criticism of acting
quality

Sarcasm: a negative
play on words

Suitability for
the audience

Summary and
recommendation
(expert opinion)

Signature: reviewer
and publisher

Reading and Comprehension

For teachers' Inspection Only

Exploring the text

Write your answers to these questions about the movie review.

Detail

1. What is the name of the film being reviewed?

Detail

2. Whose book is the film based on?

Expert opinion

3. What does the reviewer like and dislike about the computer animation in the film?

Inference

4. What audience does the reviewer feel the film is suitable/unsuitable for?

Opinion

5. Would *you* want to see this film? Why? Why not? Use examples or points from the review to help you explain.

Opinion

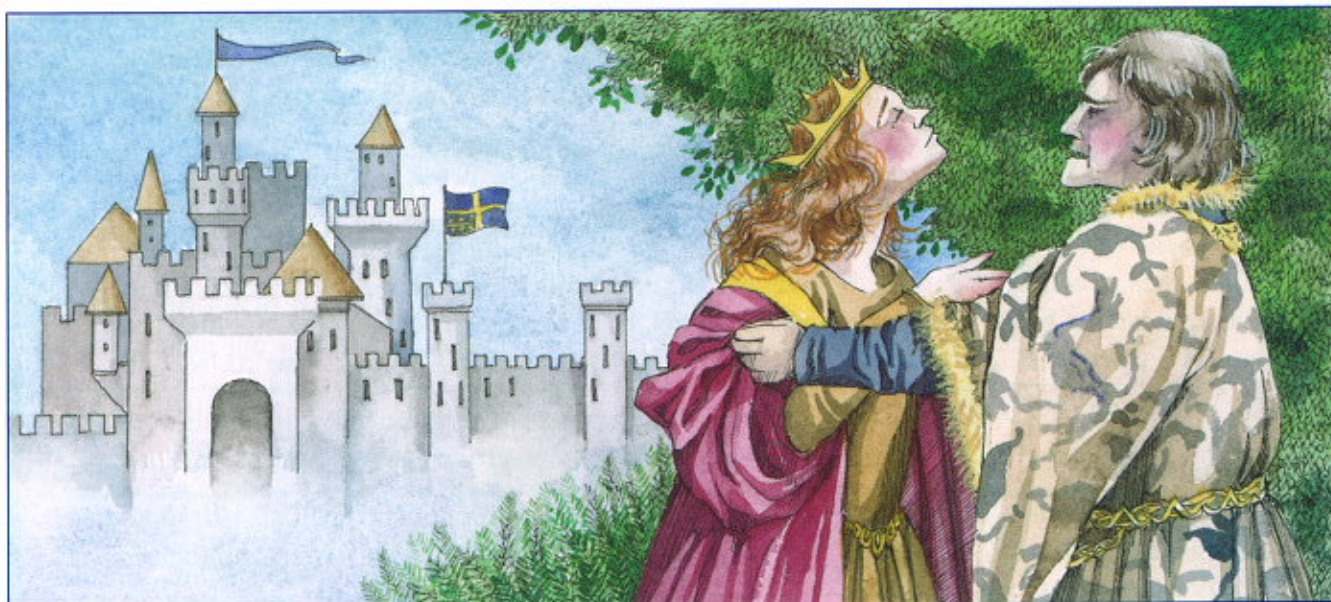
6. Give an example of how the film differs from the legend of King Arthur. Do you feel that this improves the story? Why or why not?

Bias

7. Why do you think Jamar Ericson is not quoted on the poster that advertises the film? Why were the three quotations on the poster chosen?

Bias

8. What part of this review shows that the reviewer had already made up his mind before he saw the film?



Technique and style

The sample text is a **movie review** published in a newspaper or magazine. The reviewer is describing the film and giving an expert opinion about its strengths and weaknesses. Here are some hints about how you can organise and write a review like this.

Headline

The headline has two purposes – to say what the article is about and to attract the reader's attention. The headline is often the last thing to be written in a review.

Writing a good headline means finding the words that best summarise the topic of the review and at the same time attract attention. Notice how the reviewer used words cleverly in the heading 'Lost Again!'. He used a word from the title of the film, but it can have two meanings. Does it mean the characters are lost, or the film and its makers are lost? This makes the reader want to read the review to find out.

Introduction

A review usually begins with a brief introduction to give some background information about characters, setting and the main features of the plot. The purpose of the introduction is to give the reader enough information to be able to understand the rest of the review.

Opinions and criticisms

Most of the movie review gives the reviewer's **opinions** and **criticisms** about details of the film. The details include the quality of the script, the techniques used by the film-makers, the quality of the acting and the suitability of the film for the audience. Reviewers must give their reasons for any opinion or criticism. The reader can then decide whether to agree or not.

Each topic of criticism is written within one paragraph. This helps the reader to understand and focus on different aspects of the film.

To make the review entertaining, a reviewer sometimes uses **sarcasm** in a criticism. This means that the reviewer uses a negative play on words. For example, Jamar Ericson made a clever, but negative, use of the actor's name when he wrote 'Fine's performance was not fine at all'.

Summary and recommendation

At the end of a review, the author summarises the main points of his **opinion** about the film and makes a recommendation to the reader. To make this summary memorable, the author sometimes uses **humour** or clever use of words. For example, in this review, the final words are 'It is worth seeing, but not a "must see".' Here the reviewer is using the word 'see' in two ways close together.

Signature

The **signature** tells the reader who wrote the review and who published it. This is important because the reader needs to know whether the reviewer is a recognised expert and the opinions are worth reading.



Writing project

Write a movie review. Be sure to use the structures and points explained above. Follow the steps below to help you plan, draft and write your review.

Planning

- Watch a film/movie at a theatre or on a video or DVD.
- As you watch the movie, make notes about what you like and do not like.

Drafting

- Pretend that you are an expert reviewer. Use your notes and the information in the blue box above to draft ideas for a review of the film.
- Make sure that your review includes an interesting heading, a short introduction and your criticisms and opinions. Remember to give reasons for your thoughts on the film.
- Finally, summarise your opinion of the film. Make a recommendation so others will be able to decide whether they want to see that film. Sign your review.
- Use a word processor to type your review so it can be printed and published.



Editor's hints

Making recommendations

Make sure that your review gives the reader recommendations about the film. For example:

- For whom is the film suitable?
- Is the film worth seeing?
- How well do you rate this film? What scale would you use – words, stars, numbers?

Expressing opinions

Check that you always give reasons or evidence to support your opinions.



Using references

Style guide

Review, sarcasm

- Look up *review* and *sarcasm* in your style guide. Find out more about how to write a critical review.
- Find hints on how to plan and organise your review.

Punctuation – the dash (–)

The text sample shows the dash used in several places. It has been used for different reasons.

The children are on holiday – the summer holidays this time – and they are bored.
 Fine's performance was not fine at all – so unnatural that the character failed to come to life.

- Look up *dash* in your *Junior Writers Guide* and find out why the dash is used in writing.
- Discuss the reasons the dash has been used in the text sample.

Writing Workshop (continued)

For teachers' Inspection Only

Dictionary

Sarcasm, fantasy

Use your dictionary to find the meaning of these words.

sarcasm fantasy myth legend

- In a small group, discuss the differences among a fantasy, a myth and a legend.
- Discuss problems that might be caused when people use sarcasm in their speech or writing.



Word knowledge

Supporting opinions

Reviewers must give reasons for their opinions or make comparisons to explain what they mean. Otherwise the reader cannot be sure that the opinions are worthwhile.

Words and phrases called *connectives* are often used when a writer links an opinion with a reason or compares things. Here are some examples from the review 'Lost Again!'

although	while	for example	more of a...than a...
however	because	better than	yet also...
but		so...that...	

- Find some of these words and phrases in the review and discuss how the author has used them.
- Check for these words and phrases when you are redrafting your film review or editing the reviews by others.

Spelling

-ance/-ence

Several words in the sample text end with the suffixes **-ance** and **-ence**.

audience intelligence violence performance guidance

There are many words in English that have these spelling patterns.

- Use a dictionary to find whether you can add **-ence** or **-ance** to these words.

excellent	magnificent
prefer	important
allow	different
enter	accept
silent	appear

- Record a list of these words in your personal spelling dictionary under the headings **-ance** and **-ence**.
- Discuss how these suffixes change verbs and adjectives into nouns.
- Have someone test you on ten words in your lists to see if you can spell them correctly.