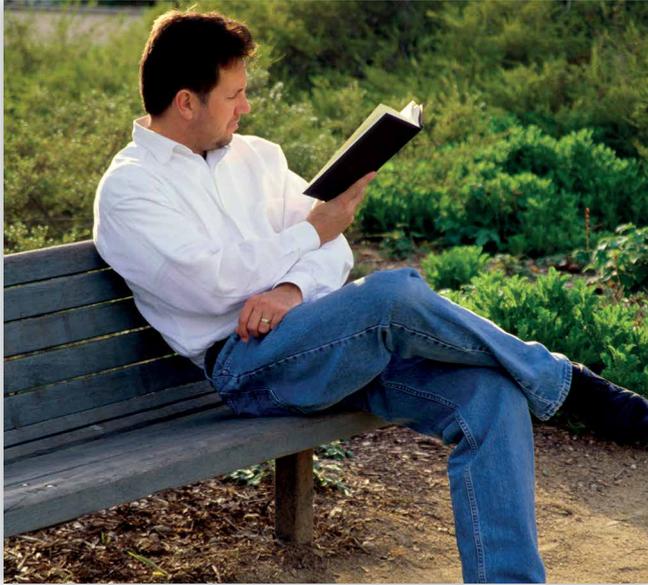


UPPER INTERMEDIATE UNIT 3



1 Work in pairs and discuss.

- 1 What films can you think of that have been adapted from novels?
- 2 Which ones did you enjoy?
- 3 Did you enjoy the book more than the film, or vice versa? Why?

2 Read the article about different film adaptations of books and choose the best summary of the text's opening and closing paragraphs.

- 1 Most film adaptations of books are successful.
- 2 There is not enough debate about the success of book-to-film adaptations.
- 3 Film adaptations of books are challenging and divide opinion.

3 Match the films A–E with the statements that the film critic makes about them 1–10. There are two statements per film.

- A *The Godfather* _____
- B *Apocalypse Now* _____
- C *Jurassic Park* _____
- D *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* _____
- E *Harry Potter* _____

- 1 The film is nothing like the book.
- 2 The film is much better than the book.
- 3 There is debate about the adaptation.
- 4 The performances were fantastic.
- 5 The technology was innovative.
- 6 The setting was stunning.
- 7 People of all ages are fans.
- 8 The film was an important achievement.
- 9 It is a very dark film.
- 10 The film is the perfect adaptation.

From Book to Film

Some of the best films ever made were based on novels. Clearly, great stories on the page can translate very well to the screen. But book-to-movie adaptations are difficult to do well and not everybody agrees about them. Some people love seeing their favourite characters come to life on screen. Others have their own idea of what characters and places should look like. For them, the adaptation never matches the original story.

Here are five of our favourites from the last fifty years.

- 1 ***The Godfather* (1972)** Everybody says the same thing about Coppola's brilliant crime drama – it is far better than the novel of the same name. The reason lies in the incredible performances by Al Pacino, Marlon Brando and others, which really make these Mafioso characters come to life. Even novelist Mario Puzo admitted that his screenplay was better than his original book!
- 2 ***Apocalypse Now* (1979)** Another Coppola masterpiece and the most surprising of Vietnam films. This is a very free adaptation of Joseph Conrad's classic novel *Heart of Darkness*, which was set in 19th-century colonial Africa. The book serves merely as the inspiration for this dreamlike dystopian view of the world and a metaphor for the suffering of war.
- 3 ***Jurassic Park* (1993)** Michael Crichton's adventure blockbuster was adapted for film by Steven Spielberg. The film's triumph lies in its remarkable special effects. It was a milestone in cinema history because the dinosaurs were created with amazing computer-generated imagery, which was very new then. For the first time, your fantasies could become a reality.
- 4 ***The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* (2001–2003)** Before Peter Jackson's films, all attempts to bring Tolkien's Middle Earth to cinematic life had been a disaster. The stunning landscapes – the film was shot in New Zealand – the battle scenes and the imaginative recreation of the characters make this a unique triumph. If only all movie adaptations could be like this one!
- 5 ***Harry Potter* (2001–2011)** There is plenty of disagreement about these eight film adaptations of J.K. Rowling's cult fantasy novels. Some book fans prefer the first two films' more faithful approach while others like the more stylised later films. In any case, they have proved incredibly popular with both parents and kids worldwide. As Rowling herself has said, it's hard to fit all of the details of her storylines into less than three hours. And that is true of all cinema. Films have limits of time and budget, novels do not. Perhaps the most incredible and powerful effects are those happening in the reader's imagination. Having said that, there is something thrilling about cinema's attempts to bring those worlds to life.

4A Match the adjectives 1–8 with nouns a)–h) to form collocations from the text.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1 favourite | a) landscapes |
| 2 incredible | b) approach |
| 3 free | c) adaptation |
| 4 classic | d) effects |
| 5 special | e) performances |
| 6 stunning | f) triumph |
| 7 unique | g) novel |
| 8 faithful | h) characters |

B How many other collocations can you form from the words?

5 Work in pairs or small groups and discuss.

- Which of the films mentioned in the text have you seen? Do you agree with the opinions? Why/Why not?
- What other book-to-film adaptations can you think of? Which have you seen and liked? Are there any that you have disliked? Why?

6  **3.1** Listen to a conversation between Emily and Arthur about film adaptations. Which five film genres do they mention?



7 Listen again and underline the correct alternative.

- It's normal that book adaptations are popular in the cinema because it is *difficult to write a new story/cheaper to use an established story*.
- Blade Runner* is incredible because it is a *mixture of two different genres/very faithful adaptation*.
- When talking about *The English Patient*, Arthur says that the author *worked closely on the film/the film doesn't have the complexity of the original novel*.
- The fact that *Psycho* is based on a novel of the same name is *common knowledge/not well known*.
- The Jungle Book* is much *more/less* serious than the original stories by Kipling.
- It was the last film *directed/produced* by Walt Disney himself.

8 The words and phrases in the box are from the recording. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words and phrases in the box.

come up with from scratch futuristic complex
expand on moving stick in your mind dark

- The film director had to _____ the original text because it was only a short story.
- The screenplay is original, the writer invented it _____.
- That film really _____, I found it very memorable.
- The English Patient* is a very _____ film, it's easy to get emotional watching it.
- Blade Runner*, like so many science-fiction films, has a very _____ feel to it.
- A lot of films based on novels are quite _____ and depressing.
- Many film directors choose stories from books because they can't _____ their own stories.
- Adapting a story for film can be a _____ process because it is hard to fit in all the action.

9 Work in groups and discuss.

- Are there any stories that you would like to see made into films? Which ones? Why?
- Summarise the story you chose for your group. What would you change in the film adaptation?