Finding Information on the International Movie Database Website

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Introduction

The Web's multimedia capabilities and interactive functions have made it an attractive medium for ESL students. Documents on the Web cover a huge range of topics, are mostly written in English and are constantly increasing in number. The Web is thus a rich database of authentic material. The International Movie Database is an example of a source of authentic material that would appeal to most teenage and adult students of ESL. It contains biographies of stars, plots of movies, famous quotations, cast information, records of awards received by films, and commentaries by viewers. This lesson requires that students practice on-line navigation and research skills and carefully decode information found at the site in order to complete the assignment.

- **Level:** high-intermediate
- **Time:** 1 hour
- **Materials:** computers with a web browser and Internet access. Depending on the number of computers available and the size of the class, students can work individually or in teams of two or three.
- **Procedure:**
  1. Introduce the activity by asking the students to name two movies that they have heard about or been to.
  2. Ask the students to think about sources where they could find information about the movie "Saving Private Ryan" and the actor Tom Hanks.
  3. Have the students launch their web browsers and point to the web site http://www.imdb.com.
  4. Explain the different search methods (by titles, people, characters, quotes, bios, plots) that this site allows.
  5. Demonstrate how to find a summary of the plot of "Saving Private Ryan" and biographical data about Tom Hanks.
  6. Give the following assignment.
  7. Circulate around the classroom addressing technical difficulties or answering questions.

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Fill in the blanks with information found at http:// www.imdb.com.

1. In the movie "You've Got Mail," the female lead character is played by _____ and the main male character by _____.

2. The movie "Braveheart" tells the story of a _____ (nationality) hero named _____. One of the taglines of this movie is "Every man _____, not every man really _____."

3. "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" is the English title for a film directed by _____. It is an action adventure movie about two warriors going after a stolen _____. It was filmed in _____ province, China.

4. The character of Hamlet in the 1996 version of the film was played by the British actor _____. However, the 1921 version of the movie was played by the _____ (nationality) actress Asta Nielsen.

5. In the movie "Mission Impossible II," mission commander Swanbeck says to the main character "Mr. _____, this isn't mission difficult, it's mission impossible. ÎDifficult' should be _____." The

agent's mission in this movie is to recover and destroy a genetically engineered disease called _____.

6. Much to many people's surprise, Gwyneth Paltrow is not English. She was actually born in _____. She received an Oscar Award in 1998 for her work in the film _____.

7. The Italian film known as "Life is Beautiful" in English tells the story of a carefree and humorous Jewish _____ (occupation) who marries a lovely schoolteacher called _____. When the Nazis take over Italy, he tries vigorously to protect his son from the horrors around him by telling the child that the Holocaust is a game where the winner will win a _____.

Answers

1. Meg Ryan, Tom Hanks
2. Scottish, William Wallace, dies, lives
3. Ang Lee, sword, Anhui
4. Kenneth Branagh, Danish
5. Hunt, a walk in the park for you, chimera
6. Los Angeles, "Shakespeare in Love"
7. book keeper, Dora, tank

Follow-up

The lesson can be followed up by asking the students to write a paragraph similar to the items in the assignment. The paragraph should contain blanks that can be filled in with information found at the site. Have the students submit their writing together with the correct answers.