

LISTENING PRACTICE #2 - LECTURE

The following is a transcript of a lecture from a film studies class. Have a friend or classmate read it to you. Then answer the questions. You can also listen to the dialogue at: www.bridge-online.cz (section: testy FCE a TOEFL)

Professor:

Okay, continuing on from last class, we're discussing films about problems in society, and, consequently, films that themselves have had an impact on society. Now, some of the social and cultural topics we've talked about are prejudice, crime, juvenile delinquency, and societal fears. We've discussed *Rebel Without a Cause*, *Do The Right Thing*, *The Exorcist*, *The Bad Seed*, and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. Another important, and controversial, issue is capital punishment... um, the death penalty... and whether it is justified or not. Many films have dealt with this theme: *Monster's Ball*, *The Green Mile*, and *Dead Man Walking*, just to name a few. All of these films are concerned with convicts on death row. Today, though, I'm going to talk about a movie that pertains to the process of conviction... about sending the accused to death. That movie is *12 Angry Men*.

12 Angry Men was a play written by Reginald Rose in 1954. He adapted the script for television later, and the film was based on this script. The film is marked by its excellent ensemble cast, its intense, claustrophobic setting, and its relevance to society and controversial issues, then and now.

Ask one of your friends to repeat part of the lecture:

Issues brought up in the film include prejudice, moral values, the strength of democracy, the changing behavior of children, and socio-economic differences.

The film stars Henry Fonda as Juror #8, the lone juror who believes the accused is not guilty. Evidence from the trial appears to clearly show that the defendant is guilty, but as the film unfolds, Juror #8 and a few others begin to reveal many weaknesses in the prosecution's case. Other jurors, though, such as Juror #3 and Juror #10 refuse to accept these points brought up by the others. Juror #10 is an ignorant bigot, while the ill-tempered Juror #3 cannot cast aside his own personal feelings about the case. Nearly the entire film takes place in the jury room. Issues brought up in the film include prejudice, moral values, the strength of democracy, the changing behavior of children, and socio-economic differences.

The film realistically depicts the attitudes of many different kinds of men in the 1950s, from a mild-mannered bank clerk to a composed, rational, slightly cold broker to an uncaring, superficial salesman, to a fair-minded and meticulous immigrant. Indeed, it is the differences among the men that make the film so compelling. These differences have also influenced society as a whole. In showing such opposing personalities in a realistic setting and being concerned with social issues, *12 Angry Men* has proven to be a useful learning tool. From learning to make arguments, to team-building and management studies at businesses, its portrayal of resolving conflicts has proven timeless. Equally timeless are its themes of fair-mindedness and the importance of reasonable doubt in the criminal justice system.

- Why does the professor mention these issues?
 - Because they are important in the class.
 - To show that *12 Angry Men* is a film classic.
 - Because he will soon explain the importance of these issues.
 - To show that *12 Angry Men* reflects issues in society.
- What can be inferred about Juror #8?
 - He is an intelligent man.
 - He is a reasonable man.
 - He is probably a taxi driver.
 - He is hot-tempered and bigoted.
- Which of the following are characteristics of *12 Angry Men*?
Choose two answers.
 - It is a film about racism.
 - It is based on a true story.
 - It is a realistic film.
 - It is praised for the performances of the actors.
- Why is *12 Angry Men* used as a learning tool in some businesses?
 - 12 Angry Men* is a film that has many different types of characters in it.
 - It teaches the value of money.
 - Because Reginald Rose was a very good businessman.
 - It teaches the value of resolving conflicts.