Good Duck, Charlie!



One of the first Hollywood film stars was the British actor Charlie Chaplin. Chaplin was born in London in 1889. He had a very poor and unhappy childhood. He left school when he was very young and worked in a number of jobs to survive. Then, he started to perform in a variety theater as a comic actor.

In 1913, he emigrated to America because he wanted to be a film actor. He entered the film industry and invented the character of Charlie the Tramp (Charlot in Italian)–a funny short man with a black mustache and a bowler hat, well known for his "duck like" walk style. He was brilliant, and the comic character he created is still famous all over the world. Charlie the Tramp utilizes the comedy of manners, the comedy of humours and also the comedy of errors. His walking style shows a false sense of pride, incorporating every now and then weird bends in the movement. The bend is not only funny enough to make people laugh at him but to laugh at themselves, at their own errors. The 'ever-idiot' Tramp walks like animals–like a duck in a lonely street.

Chaplin made wonderful comedy films like The Golden Rush, City Lights, Modern Times and The Great Dictator. Almost all these films were silent, that is they didn't have spoken dialogues or a soundtrack, but subtitles helped to tell the story. A pianist sometimes played the piano too–fast music for the exciting parts and slow music for the sad parts.

By 1919, Chaplin was rich and he started the United Artists studios with some other famous Hollywood stars. He lived in the USA for many years, but the government didn't like his political opinions as they thought he was a socialist. So, in 1952, when Chaplin tried to return to the USA after a journey to London, the Americans did not allow him back. Then, Chaplin decided to live in Switzerland until his death in 1977. He returned to the US only once, in 1972, when he received a special Oscar for his life's work. This was Hollywood way of saying 'sorry' to one of its greatest stars.

Choose the correct option.

1. When Chaplin was a child, his family was .
2. Chaplin's difficult upbringing career in the performing arts.
3. He worked .
4. Charlot is the name of .
5. Chaplin's physical comedy had both and meanings.
6. Chaplin used humor .
7. Appearing ridiculous can be an effective way of exposing human .
8. After 1952, Chaplin lived in .
9. The United States Chaplin because of .
10. Receiving a special Oscar in 1972 symbolized a change in Hollywood's towards Chaplin.

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