



READING COMPREHENSION

A. A saga is a story about what happens to a group of characters over a long period of time, in this particular case, over a few movies. Have you ever seen any of the Rocky movies? Read this article and do the reading comprehension activities below.

40 Years of Rocky': Sylvester Stallone's best revelations in the new documentary

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USA TODAY



In 1975, then-unknown actor Sylvester Stallone was confused why director John G. Avildsen, who died in 2017, was continually shooting home movies behind the scenes on the set of "Rocky."

Decades after "Rocky" became a surprise hit, took the best-picture Oscar and made Stallone a global superstar, he came to appreciate the candid footage from the low-budget, long-shot movie about a boxing underdog. Those moments have been crafted into the new documentary "40 Years of Rocky: The Birth of a Classic" (available Tuesday on digital HD platforms), directed by Derek Wayne Johnson with Stallone narrating. Though he thought it was a waste of film, now he is glad he did it.

Sylvester Stallone fought to give Rocky Balboa that famous fedora

The cheap felt hat worn by Rocky Balboa was a bone of contention with the film's producers. "No one wanted me to wear the hat," Stallone says of his spontaneous \$3 purchase. The filmmakers balked because Gene Hackman had worn a similar hat in 1971's "The French Connection." Stallone said "It kind of tops off the character." The actor would go on to wear the hat in all five Rocky sequels and two "Creed" films. The hat shows "he's kind of nerdy in a way," he says.

The 300 extras were cut from the ice rink scene

Stallone had written an elaborate ice skating scene for "Rocky" depicting the socially awkward boxer's first date with Adrian (Talia Shire). The scene featured 300 extras and a show-off ice instructor who ended up in a tussle with Rocky. But on shooting day, Stallone showed up to an empty ice rink set. Stallone says he was told, "We had to cut back on the extras a bit: 'To what?' To none. I said, 'You're kidding me!'" He rewrote the scene on the spot to make Rocky and Adrian alone on the ice. "It turned out to be 1,000 times better," says Stallone

The fight makeup ruined Stallone's eyebrows forever

In the months of "Rocky" rehearsal, makeup artists worked up experimental attempts to depict Rocky's swollen fight face. Many were comic failures. One failed experiment featured Stallone having his nose glued to the side of his face. "It was so bad, it looked like a cartoon, like I had run into a wall," says the star. But they got it right, even if the adhesive and removal took a hair toll of Stallone. "I ended up with barely any eyebrows left for the rest of my life. So there is that," he says.

"Rocky" was a family affair

Stallone's brother Frank Jr. played a street singer ("We couldn't afford anyone else") and father Frank served as the fight's bell ringer as Rocky was outmatched in the fight against Apollo Creed (Carl Weathers). "He kept ringing the bell 20 seconds late! He wasn't good at it!"

The camera work was revolutionary

The documentary shows Avildsen's car camera, a gigantic apparatus latched to the moving car for driving scenes. "Rocky" was also one of the pioneer movies for inventor Garrett Brown's "Steadicam," which Stallone said "looked like a vacuum cleaner." But it was a "game changer" in holding the camera perfectly steady to shoot Stallone sprinting through the streets for those memorable training scenes.

Stallone personally greeted fans at theaters

Stallone recalls the film's opening in two theaters, including one in New York City, where he had worked as an usher. At a Los Angeles theater, Stallone showed up to personally thank ticket purchasers. "I didn't know how long it was going to last. I didn't know I was going to be that successful," says Stallone.

The documentary features Stallone celebrating the film's editing at a paper-plate home barbecue with crew members, Avildsen and the director's children.

"The future biggest world superstar with the director and friends and they have no clue what's about to happen, no idea," Johnson tells USA TODAY.

A-1 Write any of the underlined words in the text, next to their definitions. (8/0,5=4)

- 1) A low, soft felt hat with a curled brim and the crown creased lengthways _____
- 2) One who escorts people to their seats _____

3) Part of a cinema or television film recording a particular event _____

4) A disposable plate made of cardboard _____

5) The person who seems least likely to succeed or win _____

6) Refused abruptly _____

7) Fastened _____

8) An intense argument, controversy, or struggle _____

A-2 Read the article again and choose the best answer to these questions. (8/2=16)

VOCABULARY

B.1 Some people who attend the movie theater, go through different situations. Substitute the phrases in **bold** by dragging a suitable idiom from the box. WATCH OUT! There is one you don't need. (5/2=10)

keep a straight face - **keep our fingers crossed** - **see eye to eye**

stick one's nose into - **held my tongue** - **make head or tail**

a) The noise those kids made during the movie was so bothering, that I ***didn't say anything to upset their parents.*** _____

b) The usher looked ridiculous in those tight yellow garments, but the people tried to ***look serious and not laugh.*** _____

c) As much as I tried, I couldn't ***understand*** the plot of the movie! _____

d) We've been waiting to buy the tickets for this sequel for hours! Many people are waiting in the website, let's ***hope everything goes well.*** _____

e) We might disagree about many things, but fortunately we ***agree*** on our taste in movies. _____

B.2 This is what happens when you attend a show, movie or concert. Choose the correct word to complete each statement. (6/1=6)

The soccer fans were **humming / chanting** the name of the best player in the field.

The music could be heard from miles away, the ground **vibrating / trembling** to the beat of the songs.

The technician will be shooting today the *scenery / scene* where the couple is chased in the woods.

The award-winning actress will hit the New York *stage / scene* as Ophelia, from the well-known play Othello.

The audience couldn't help but *cheer / chant* as Placido finished performing the last overture.

The theater doesn't want a journalist for the show. They want a *seasonal / seasoned* critic who will be able to tell the audience about the plays and shows.

B.3 For most viewers “Joker” was the movie of the year in 2019. Read some facts about it, and choose the correct phrasal verb to complete each idea. (4/1=4)



LISTENING

C- Have you ever asked yourself why we watch movies? Listen to these ideas and choose True or False for the statements bellow. (10/2=20)

1) Entertainment is difficult to obtain.	TRUE	FALSE
2) Social media makes us be the heroes in our own stories.	TRUE	FALSE
3) Movie tickets are really cheap.	TRUE	FALSE
4) When you go to the movies, you know how the movie will turn out.	TRUE	FALSE
5) Movies make us experience things different from our daily lives.	TRUE	FALSE
6) Movies have the power to transport us through different times.	TRUE	FALSE
7) Movies make distinctions because of our peculiarities.	TRUE	FALSE
8) Movies show people's flaws and make us still accept them.	TRUE	FALSE
9) According to Bergman, any form of art can go beyond consciousness.	TRUE	FALSE

10) Watching movies allows us to know other people and ourselves.

TRUE

FALSE

GRAMMAR

D.1 Many young fans were waiting outside Marvel Studios waiting for Robert Downey Jr. Join the sentences below by using the **Participle Clause** given. (4/2.5=10)

They main character of "Avengers" is played by the well-known actor Robert Downey Jr. (who)
Robert Downey Jr., _____, plays the main character in "Avengers"



The boy's parents had paid his ticket. The boy was allowed to participate in the "greet & meet". (whose)

The boy, _____, was allowed to participate in the "greet & meet".

The children sat to watch the trailer of the new movie. All the seats had a signed picture. (where)

All the seats _____ had a signed picture

They were surprised by the actors. They appeared on the movie. (that)

They were surprised _____

D.2 "Top Gun, Maverick" will now speed into theaters this year, something everybody has been waiting for! Rewrite these active sentences into **Passive Voice** making the necessary changes. (5/2=10)



Tom Cruise's fans were awaiting for the sequel from a long time ago.

The studios had planned to release the movie on December 2019.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, they had to cancel it till November 2021.

They will release the sequel 36 years after the original.

Everybody says the sequel is going to be a real blockbuster.

E. WRITING.

Write a review about a show, concert or animation movie you enjoyed (or not). Organize it in four paragraphs. (20)



