The Oscars

The most glamorous annual event in the world of cinema took place in a theatre in Los Angeles on 27th February: the Academy Awards, or 'Oscars', ceremony.

The Oscars are awarded for excellent work in the film industry, and all of them are for work on one specific film. There are twenty-four awards in total, with 'Best Actor', 'Best Actress', 'Best Picture' (best film) and 'Best Director' probably the most well known.

The winner of each award receives a famous trophy known as an 'Oscar' – a gold-plated statuette, thirty-four centimetres high, of a person holding a sword and standing on a reel of film.

The people who decide who should receive the awards are members of the Academy (the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, to give it its full name) – about 6,000 people in total, including actors, directors and screenwriters.

The films that have won the highest-ever number of Oscars are *Ben Hur* (1959), *Titanic* (1997), and *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003). Each of them won eleven, including Best Picture and Best Director.

Of all the famous people acting in films today, some have won the Oscar for Best Actor or Best Actress twice – including Tom Hanks, Jack Nicholson, Jodie Foster and Hilary Swank – but none have won it three times.

The big winner at the 2011 awards was *The King's Speech*, the true story of how the British king in the late 1930s, George VI, worked with a speech therapist to try to overcome his stutter at a time when, with the Second World War approaching, he needed to make important speeches. It won four Oscars in total, including Best Picture, Best Actor (for the British actor Colin Firth, who played George VI) and Best Director.

The winner of the Oscar for Best Actress was Natalie Portman for her role as a ballet dancer in *Black Swan*. It was no surprise that *The Social Network*, the film about the creation of the social networking website Facebook, won three awards, or that *Toy Story 3* won Best Animation, but some people were surprised that the western *True Grit* didn't win any awards.

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Exercise 1

Team A

Here are the answers to some questions about the text on Worksheet A, but what are the questions? When you have prepared the questions, Team B will have to answer them as part of a quiz.
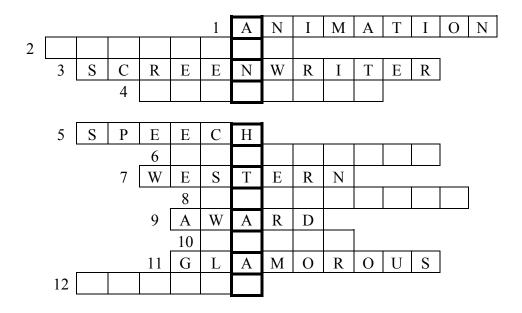
1. In Los Angeles.

2. Thirty-four centimetres.

3. Jodie Foster has won two Oscars for Best Actress.

4. He plays the British king.

5. Members of the Academy decide who wins the Oscars.

6. *Titanic* won eleven Oscars.

7. It is a social networking website.

8. A reel of film.

Team B

Here are the answers to some questions about the text on Worksheet A, but what are the questions? When you have prepared the questions, Team A will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

1. The Oscars are for the film industry.

2. *The King's Speech* won the Oscar for Best Picture in 2011.

3. *Ben Hur* won eleven Oscars.

4. It is a western.

5. There are twenty-four.

6. She plays a ballet dancer.

7. His problem is that he has a stutter.

8. Tom Hanks has won two Oscars for Best Actor.

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Exercise 2

Student A: You and your partner have the same crossword, but with different words completed. Take it in turns to describe the words to each other and fill in the gaps. The name of an American actress who was one of the presenters of the 2011 Oscars ceremony will then read from top to bottom.

```
 1  A  N  I  M  A  T  I  O  N
 2  _  _  _  _  _  N  _
 3  S  C  R  E  E  N  W  R  I  T  E  R
 4           _  _
 5  S  P  E  E  C  H
 6              _  _  _  _
 7  W  E  S  T  E  R  N
 8              _  _  _  _  _  _
 9  A  W  A  R  D
10              _  _  _
11  G  L  A  M  O  R  O  U  S
12  _  _  _  _  _  A  _
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....

Student B: You and your partner have the same crossword, but with different words completed. Take it in turns to describe the words to each other and fill in the gaps. The name of an American actress who was one of the presenters of the 2011 Oscars ceremony will then read from top to bottom.

```
 1           _  N  _  _  _  _  _  _
 2  C  E  R  E  M  O  N  Y
 3  _  _  _  _  E  _  _  _
 4        D  I  R  E  C  T  O  R
 5  _  _  _  _  _
 6        S  T  A  T  U  E  T  T  E
 7  _  _  _  A  _
 8        T  H  E  R  A  P  I  S  T
 9  _  _  _  H  _  _
10  S  W  O  R  D
11  _  _  _  _  _  _  _
12  T  R  O  P  H  Y
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