

1 VOCABULARY: Words connected to filmmaking

- a** Match the jobs (1–6) to the definitions (a–f).
- 1 leading actor
 - 2 supporting actor
 - 3 director
 - 4 stunt man / woman
 - 5 screenwriter
 - 6 an extra
- a a person who writes the script for a film
 - b a person who plays the main role in a film
 - c a person who is a background actor, and doesn't have a speaking role
 - d a person who plays an important role in a film, but isn't the star
 - e a person who performs dangerous acts in a film
 - f a person who controls a film's artistic and dramatic elements
- b**  Work in groups. Discuss which job would you most like to do and why.
- c** Read the first part of a newspaper article, below, about a day in the life of someone in the film industry. Which job in 1a does the person do?

A Day in the Life of a...

It's six in the morning and I'm sitting in an enormous room full of hundreds of people. And I'm wearing an astronaut's costume. On my right, there's a woman with two heads. On my left, there's a man with a long blue beard. We're all on the moon, and in front of us is a huge space station. We're all drinking coffee, reading newspapers or looking at our phones. We've been waiting for the star to arrive for two hours. This might sound like a strange dream or even a nightmare. But it's just another day in the life of a...



2 READING

- a**  Work in pairs. Think about a day in the life of an extra. Do you think these statements are true or false?
- 1 You meet famous actors.
 - 2 You work 9 to 5.
 - 3 There is delicious food to eat.
 - 4 It's sometimes fun but sometimes difficult.
 - 5 Everyone on the film set usually gets on.
- b** Read the rest of the article on page 51 to check your ideas in 2a.
- c** Read the article again. Answer the questions.
- 1 Why is the actor angry in paragraph 2?
 - 2 Why can't the extra eat?
 - 3 Why is the actor unhappy in paragraph 4?
 - 4 What two rules do extras have to follow?
 - 5 Did the scene on the beach take four days because the extras said the wrong lines?



BETTER READING: UNDERSTANDING UNKNOWN WORDS

Often, as you read you will come across new and unknown words. Use the surrounding words and sentences to give you context. This will help you to work out the part of speech, and often the meaning.

- 1 Look at the underlined words below from the text and answer questions 1–3 in pairs. And now she's upside down.
The actor is just standing in front of an enormous green screen.
 - 1 What kind of word is it? (e.g. a verb, noun or adjective?)
Look at the words before and after (e.g. an adjective sometimes follows *be*).
Look at the beginnings and endings of the words (e.g. a verb sometimes has an *-ing* ending).
 - 2 What's the topic (e.g. making a science fiction film) or situation (e.g. an actor is doing a stunt)?
 - 3 Which is the correct definition of *upside down*?
 - a) *upside down*. Adj. the top part is where the bottom part should be.
 - b) *upside down*. Adj. in a difficult situation.
 Which is the correct definition of *green screen*?
 - a) *green screen*. Adj. Another word for scenery.
 - b) *green screen*. Noun. A green background.
A film is sometimes made in front of it. A different background film is added later.

- 1 We're making a science fiction thriller, which is based on a best-selling children's book. It's set in outer space, but we're most definitely not in outer space. We're on a film set outside London. It's wet, it's cold and things are going slowly.
- 2 We're doing a particularly difficult scene. Again. Ten minutes ago, one of the supporting actors (I'm not allowed to name her) was lifted up into the air by her feet (she's doing all her own stunts). And now she's upside down, stuck halfway up. And she's getting angry. She's trying to explain to the director that her character would never get herself into a situation like this. She says she's hungry. This is take number 56.
- 3 I'm really hungry too. We've been told we have to be ready to go in five minutes. So we have to keep our costumes on. This makes it difficult to eat. Impossible to drink. I really need a sandwich but it takes five minutes to take my astronaut's helmet off, so I'm going to have to wait. The woman next to me keeps knocking me with one of her two heads.
- 4 It's mid-afternoon. The star still hasn't turned up. I still haven't eaten. I'm seriously grumpy. I've been given a new costume to wear. I'm an alien now. We're doing another scene in which I'm part of a large crowd of aliens. There are about a hundred of us. One of the supporting actors is having an argument with a small cute alien. But the small cute alien isn't really there. The actor is just standing in front of an enormous green screen. (They are going to add the small cute alien later). The supporting actor isn't happy about it. 'I can't

have an argument with the air!' he is shouting. The large purple alien next to me whispers, 'Isn't he supposed to be an actor?'

I start laughing and everyone looks at me. The director loses his temper and starts shouting.

'If you make another noise,' he says, 'you're fired!'

- 5 There are lots of rules you have to follow when you're an extra. You can't talk to the actors. It says so in the contract. You are given food, but it's not very good. In fact, there are usually two different refreshment areas: one for the actors and one for the extras. Extras can't eat from the actors' area. The actors' is always a lot nicer. It is not a glamorous job. I once had to walk along the same beach for four days, while the actors remembered their lines. I had to pretend to have a conversation with another extra. We had a lot of fun. We just repeated the word 'banana' to each other again and again. It was really funny.
- 6 It's almost midnight now. The supporting actor is still trying to have an argument with the small cute alien. The alien still isn't there. There's some noise by the door. The director stops. Everyone stops and looks. The star has finally arrived. He's shouting. He wants the story changed. Maybe we're going to have to do today's scenes again.
- 7 Look out for me when the film comes out. I'm the red alien with three heads who looks really, really bored and just wants to go home.



3 SPEAKING

a Work in groups and answer the questions.

- 1 Do you think being an extra is a good way to become successful in films?
- 2 In which of the following would you most like to be an extra? Why?
 - a fantasy film made in a studio
 - a science fiction film made in a studio
 - a thriller made in New York
 - a romantic comedy made in Paris
 - an action film made in the jungle

3 Imagine you are going to be in a film. Who would you most like to be for a day? Why?

- an astronaut
- a member of a royal family
- a teacher
- a car salesman
- a president
- a detective