1 SPEAKING

a 💬 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

1 Why do you think cartoons are popular with many children and adults?
2 When you were a child what cartoon(s) did you like? What did you like about them?
3 If you didn't like cartoons, why didn't you like them? What other kinds of TV programmes did you like watching?

2 VOCABULARY: Words to describe films

a Read the definitions of adjectives 1–4. Which noun from a–d is the best match for each adjective?

1 ☐ *cute* – pleasant and nice to look at, particularly a small child or an animal
2 ☐ *smooth* – when something flows easily and has no sudden changes
3 ☐ *sentimental* – when something makes a person have feelings of sadness or sympathy in an obvious way
4 ☐ *underrated* – more valuable or important than people realise

a story
b film director
c film editing
d character

b 💬 Tell each other about films or TV programmes you have seen recently. Use the adjectives in 2a.

3 READING

a 💬 Answer the questions.

1 Have you heard of anime? If so, tell your partner about it. If not, can you guess what anime is?

b Read the first part of Rick's blog on page 49. Are the statements about anime films and TV programmes true or false?

1 The very first anime film is more than 100 years old.
2 The anime style was developed by artists from Japan and the United States working together.
3 Many anime characters began life as characters in manga (Japanese comics).
4 The majority of anime films are aimed at boys and young men.
5 Science fiction is a popular anime genre.

BETTER READING: IDENTIFYING POINTS OF VIEW

In a discussion text like a blog or an essay, it is useful to identify the different points of view.

In the second section of his blog, Rick acknowledges other people's points of view with this phrase:
… people tend to think that …
1 Underline similar phrases in the other paragraphs.
2 Why does Rick acknowledge these other points of view?
  a He wants to present a balanced discussion.
  b He wants to show that these people are wrong.
3 In discussion texts like this, what is the typical order for giving your own or acknowledging other people's opinion?
  a The writer gives his/her opinion and then acknowledges what other people say.
  b The writer outlines what other people say or think and then gives his or her opinion.

c Read the second part of Rick's blog on page 49: *What I say*. Do the statements below express Rick's opinions or other people's opinions? Write *R* (Rick's) or *O* (other people's) or *B* (both). Compare your answers with a partner. Do you agree with any of the views?

1 People don't realise how good anime films are. ___
2 Cartoons are just for children. ___
3 There are only two genres of anime. ___
4 Anime characters' eyes are big and very expressive. ___
5 The animation in anime films is more limited than in other genres. ___

4 SPEAKING

a 💬 What genres of films or TV programmes do you prefer to watch? Why?

- adventure
- romance
- drama
- comedy
- thriller
- cartoons
- horror

b Think about a film that you'd really like to see. Use the questions to make some notes.

1 What genre is it?
2 What is it about?
3 Who are the main characters?
4 Who are the actors?

c 💬 Tell you partner about the film you chose in 4b. Try to persuade your partner to watch the film with you.

Mr. Animation's *Blog*
by Rick

Everything you ever wanted to know about cartoons and animation

Anime

What is it?

Anime is what we call an animation style – it's a Japanese word. The characters all look cute – big eyes, clearly defined hairstyles, very expressive faces. Basically, anime is animated manga – Japanese comic books.

Did you know?

- The first anime film was made in 1917 – some manga artists in Japan brought their drawings to life.

- Colour anime films were first produced in Japan in the 1950s.

- Anime TV series started in the 1960s, first in Japan and then around the world. One of the most popular series was *Astro Boy* about the adventures of a robot boy. He started life as a manga character then turned into a TV star.

- The first anime to appeal directly to young girls was *Kimba the White Lion* – all about a cute baby lion.

- In the 1970s people began to associate anime with science fiction – popular series included *Star Blazers* and *Battle of the Planets*.

- In the 1990s *Sailor Moon,* a fantasy story for young girls, was created. It's one of the biggest selling anime or manga of all time.

What I say

I think anime are really underrated because in my opinion some people take too narrow a view of them. Outside Japan, people tend to think that anime are just cartoons, and we mostly associate cartoons with being children's entertainment. It's true that a lot of anime are aimed at children, but often they are aimed more at adults. This is becoming more and more the case these days. They have quite sophisticated stories and the characters have real depth. You really need to see a full-length anime film to really appreciate this.

The other criticism that people have is that anime only fit into two film genres: science fiction and fantasy fiction. But again, this isn't so. There are anime that are historical dramas, crime stories, romances and comedies. Even better, they often mix genres in a way that no other films do, so you can find anime that are a mix of romance, comedy and disaster.

People sometimes say they can't take anime seriously because the characters have eyes that are too big. Well, it's true that the characters have a very specific visual style. But by making the eyes large, you can really see the range of expressions that a character has, and it allows you to focus on their feelings.

Other people criticise the animation of anime films. They say it's too limited, particularly if you compare it to something like Pixar films. That may be so, but I think anime are better at depicting scenes. They show more depth and create much more atmosphere. I think a lot of other cartoons are very two-dimensional by comparison.

So to anybody whose memory of anime is just cartoons for kids on TV when they were growing up, I'd say go to a recent anime film and see how much they have changed. Go with an open mind – you may be surprised.