

Movies & Languages 2013-2014

The Help



About the movie (subtitled version)

DIRECTOR	Tate Taylor
YEAR / COUNTRY	2011 / USA
GENRE	Drama
ACTORS	Emma Stone, Viola Davis, Bryce Dallas Howard, Jessica Chastain, Octavia Spencer, Allison Cheney

PLOT

The Help is a film about a young white woman, Skeeter, and her relationship with two black maids during the early 1960's Civil Rights era in the United States. Skeeter is a journalist who decides to write a book from the point of view of the maids ("The Help"), exposing the racism they are faced with as they work with white families.

The film is set in Jackson, Mississippi in the early 1960's and is based on an adaptation of a novel written by Kathryn Stockett.

On 29th January 2012, the film won the Screen Actors Guild Award for "Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture". In February 2012, the film received four Academy Award nominations including best picture. Octavia Spencer won the Oscar for best supporting actress.

LANGUAGE

Standard American English, Southern accent at times, black English.

GRAMMAR

As and Like

1. Similarity

We can use like or as to say things that are similar.

a. **Like** is a preposition. We use like before a noun or pronoun.

You look **like** your sister.

He ran **like** the wind.

She's dressed **like** me.

We also use like to give examples.

He's good at some subjects, **like** mathematics.

In mountainous countries, **like** Switzerland.

b. **As** is a conjunction. We use as before a clause, and before an expression beginning with a preposition.

Nobody knows her **as** I do.

We often drink tea with the meal, **as** they do in China.

On Friday, **as** on Tuesday, the meeting will be at 8.30.

2. Function

We use **as**, not **like**, to say what function a person or thing has---what jobs people do, what things are used for, etc.

He worked **as** a waiter for two years.
Please don't use your plate **as** an ashtray.

VOCABULARY

Gigging: laughing	Long haul: long time
Bridge club: members of a group that plays the card game on a regular basis	Take a hint: take this advice
Birthing blues: problems accompanying pregnancy	Ambrosia: something pleasing
Missus: Mrs.	Had the nerve to ask: had the courage or audacity
Tee-tee: urinate	Nigra: negro, black. African-American woman
Wedding shower: party for bride before her wedding	“Separate but equal”: a policy of the USA which was the legal basis for segregation
To be on the lookout: be attentive, watchful	Chop-chop: quickly, promptly
Terrible-awful: bad	To pounce on: to leap on, to draw attention to something
Short cut: a quicker way of getting somewhere or doing something	Chutzpah: not afraid to do or say things that shock, annoy or embarrass other people
Sass-mouthing: disrespectful language or behaviour	Medgar Evers: a U.S. Civil Rights leader who was Killed in 1963 by the Ku Klux Klan
“Jim Crow”: a name given to the laws and regulations in U.S. states that supported and continued racial segregation after the Civil War	Show gumption: demonstrate courage and audacity
Sugar Bowl: an important university football game in the U.S.	