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## **Star Wars breaks box office records**

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### **Today's contents**

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
After Reading	6
Discussion	7
Speaking	8
Language	9
Listening Gap Fill	10
Homework	11
Answers	12

**24 May, 2005**

## THE ARTICLE

### Star Wars breaks box office records

**BNE:** *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, the sixth and final installment of the Star Wars series, has broken almost all box office records in its opening four days. It became the first movie to rake in more than \$50 million on its opening day. Industry analysts have described this as "staggering". Avid fans, many in full Star Wars regalia, waited for hours for initial screenings across the U.S. Tickets went on sale at one minute past midnight in the more than 9,000 theaters that screened the movie. "Sith" also set the record for the biggest global debut ever, a simultaneous release in 104 countries.

Even though "Sith" earned \$108 million in weekend sales, it failed to topple *Spiderman* as the biggest weekend earner of all time. *Spiderman* netted an impressive \$114 million in 2002. Still, it does make the new Star Wars blockbuster only the second movie in cinema history to earn more than \$100 million in a weekend. Putting things into perspective, that is double the earnings of the final Lord of the Rings movie. *Episode III* easily surpassed takings of the preceding two Star Wars movies. *Attack of the Clones* pulled in \$80 million on its opening weekend in 2002, while *The Phantom Menace* grossed \$65 million in 1999.

## WARM-UPS

**1. HEADLINE:** In pairs / groups, make your own news report from the words "break", "box office" and "records". Develop the story, complete with characters and facts, and tell it to another partner / group. Decide whose story is the best, funniest, strangest, most probable, etc.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Revenge / Star Wars / movie theaters / fans / movie tickets / \$50 million / weekend sales / blockbuster movies / earnings*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with blockbuster movies. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**4. MOVIE OPINIONS:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these opinion you agree with. Discuss how much truth there is in each one.

- a. Movies are art.
- b. Going to the movies is the best entertainment money can buy.
- c. Life would be boring without movies.
- d. The book is always better than the movie.
- e. Movie stars get paid too much.
- f. Videos are better - the small screen is better than the big screen.
- g. Hollywood movies aren't as good as European, Indian, Chinese or Japanese movies.
- h. There's too much killing in movies.

**5. BLOCKBUSTERS:** Which of these movie series have you seen? Did you like them?

- Star Wars
- Matrix
- Spiderman
- Lord of the Rings
- Harry Potter
- James Bond / 007
- X-Men
- Other?

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Aliens destroyed employee records in a box company's offices.         | T / F |
| b. The new Star Wars movie is episode three in a six-film series.        | T / F |
| c. The movie became the first to rake in \$50 million on opening day.    | T / F |
| d. Fans dressed up in Star Wars costumes to watch the movie.             | T / F |
| e. The movie was released simultaneously in over 100 countries.          | T / F |
| f. The movie smashed box office records for weekend earnings.            | T / F |
| g. The movie is one of eight that has netted \$100 million in a weekend. | T / F |
| h. It is a bigger financial success than previous Star Wars films.       | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. installment | showed        |
| b. rake in     | previous      |
| c. staggering  | earn          |
| d. regalia     | notable       |
| e. screened    | oust          |
| f. topple      | episode       |
| g. impressive  | outdid        |
| h. perspective | attire        |
| i. surpassed   | proportion    |
| j. preceding   | mind boggling |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                        |                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. final               | fans                        |
| b. box                 | an impressive \$114 million |
| c. rake                | topple Spiderman            |
| d. avid                | in more than \$50 million   |
| e. set                 | surpassed takings           |
| f. it failed to        | into perspective            |
| g. the biggest weekend | installment                 |
| h. Spiderman netted    | the record                  |
| i. Putting things      | earner of all time          |
| j. Episode III easily  | office records              |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

**BNE:** *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, the sixth and \_\_\_\_\_ installment of the Star Wars series, has broken almost all box office records in its opening four days. It became the first movie to \_\_\_\_\_ in more than \$50 million on its opening day. Industry \_\_\_\_\_ have described this as "\_\_\_\_\_". Avid fans, many in full Star Wars \_\_\_\_\_, waited for hours for initial screenings across the U.S. Tickets went on sale at one minute past midnight in the more than 9,000 theaters that \_\_\_\_\_ the movie. "Sith" also set the record for the biggest global \_\_\_\_\_ ever, a \_\_\_\_\_ release in 104 countries.

Even though "Sith" earned \$108 million in weekend sales, it failed to \_\_\_\_\_ *Spiderman* as the biggest weekend \_\_\_\_\_ of all time. *Spiderman* \_\_\_\_\_ an impressive \$114 million in 2002. Still, it does make the new Star Wars \_\_\_\_\_ only the second movie in cinema history to earn more than \$100 million in a weekend. Putting things into \_\_\_\_\_, that is double the earnings of the final Lord of the Rings movie. *Episode III* easily \_\_\_\_\_ takings of the \_\_\_\_\_ two Star Wars movies. *Attack of the Clones* \_\_\_\_\_ in \$80 million on its opening weekend in 2002, while *The Phantom Menace* grossed \$65 million in 1999.

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surpassed  
netted

## AFTER READING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**box**' and '**office**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare and talk about your answers to this exercise.

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT CINEMA SURVEY:** In pairs / groups write down questions about the cinema and movies.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make a mini-presentation to another group / the class on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- installment
- broken
- industry
- regalia
- initial
- simultaneous
- topple
- impressive
- history
- perspective
- surpassed
- grossed

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Were you interested by the headline of this article?
- b. Do you like reading about movie news?
- c. Have you seen any of the Star Wars movies?
- d. What do you know about the Star Wars stories and characters?
- e. Do you like sci-fi movies?
- f. How important are movies in your life?
- g. Can you remember your first trip to the movie theater?
- h. Do you prefer Hollywood movies or those from other countries?
- i. Is going to the movies good value for money?
- j. What could make going to the cinema a better experience?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading the article?
- b. What did you think of this news?
- c. Are you interested in how much money movies make?
- d. What genre of movies do you like best?
- e. Would you deck yourself out in full movie regalia to see a film?
- f. What would life be like without movies?
- g. Which do you prefer, the small or big screen?
- h. Are movies a form of art?
- i. Have you ever greatly anticipated the opening of a movie?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

**ULTIMATE CINEMA:** You are in charge of creating the ultimate movie-going experience. In pairs / groups, decide on the new ideas for each element in the table below that will get movie goers flocking to movie theaters:

ELEMENT	IDEAS
Seats	
Ticket buying	
Discount days	
Refreshments	
Brochures	
Foyer / Lobby	
Screen	
Extras	

Change partners and compare recommendations. Provide each other with feedback. Combine your ideas to make the ultimate cinema concept. Return to your original partner / group and show them your revised ideas.



## LANGUAGE

### MONEY WORDS:

- Circle any words you find in the text that relate to money.
- Compare the words you circled with those of your partner(s).
- Look for other meanings of the words in a dictionary. Show your findings to your partner(s)
- Make questions about real life (not the Star Wars movie) using these words and ask them to another partner.

### Star Wars breaks box office records

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<u>MONEY WORDS</u>	<u>OTHER MEANINGS</u>	<u>QUESTIONS</u>

## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### Star Wars breaks box office records

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## **HOMEWORK**

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on Star Wars. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.
- 3. MOVIES AND ME:** Write an essay about movies and how important they are in your life. Start with memories of your first movie or trip to the movie theater. Write about your thoughts on how the movie industry has changed and is changing.
- 4. DIARY:** Imagine you are a movie star. Write your diary / journal entry for one day in your life on the set of a new movie you are making. Write about the people around you.

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. T      d. T      e. T      f. F      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. installment	episode
b. rake in	earn
c. staggering	mind boggling
d. regalia	attire
e. screened	showed
f. topple	oust
g. impressive	notable
h. perspective	proportion
i. surpassed	outdid
j. preceding	previous

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. final	installment
b. box	office records
c. rake	in more than \$50 million
d. avid	fans
e. set	the record
f. it failed to	topple Spiderman
g. the biggest weekend	earner of all time
h. Spiderman netted	an impressive \$114 million
i. Putting things	into perspective
j. Episode III easily	surpassed takings

### GAP FILL:

#### Star Wars breaks box office records

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### LANGUAGE:

box office records / rake in / on sale / earned / earner / netted / earnings / takings / pulled in / grossed