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Warm-up

Before class, find movie posters for *Terminator 2, Casper,* and *Civil War*. Alternatively, ask students to watch film trailers for the movies before class as a flipped classroom task. Then, in class, ask students to look at the movie posters and discuss the questions: *What kind of movie is each? What do you think they are about? What do they have in common?* Finally, ask volunteers to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Teaching Tip

For Exercise 3
For lower-level students, provide them with a definition of the key words. For mid-level students, provide them with the part of speech of the key word if they have difficulty making a sentence. For more advanced learners, leave the exercise as is.
1. *employ: utilize*
2. *enhance: improve*
3. *counterpart: one of two parts that complement each other*
4. *grasp: understand something challenging*
5. *eerie: strange and mysterious*
6. *persuasive: convincing and compelling*

Differentiation Strategy

For Exercise 2
Go to the Differentiation Strategies Bank and adapt this exercise using Strategy 6.

Flexi Exercises
(To adjust to students' needs, you can either use or not the activities below)

Exercise 1

Arts

What were movies like before CGI?

01 With a classmate, write a list of special effects used in your favorite films.
Answers will vary.

02 Read "The Age of Algorithms." Check (✔) if the sentences are true.

1. Some people only go to the movies to see the special effects. **✔**

2. One of the first movies to use CGI was *Terminator 2*. **✔**

3. The actors in *Casper* found it challenging to work with a CGI character. ◯

4. Audiences liked the VFX in *Civil War*. ◯

5. It is believed that combining technology and physical effects makes the films more realistic. **✔**

The Age of Algorithms

Movie-making has dramatically evolved since the first films. Now, cinematographers **employ** technology to **enhance** their works to the point that some moviegoers watch movies just for the special effects themselves.

Directors in the 1990s were some of the first to incorporate computer-generated imagery (CGI). Consider the killer robot T-1000 from *Terminator 2* (1991), which turned into liquid metal. If 3D effects such as multiple morphing hadn't been used, the character wouldn't have had such realistic human movements. Audiences no longer had to visualize what a robot would look like because the work had been done for them.

The children's movie *Casper* (1995) was the first to utilize an entirely CGI protagonist who interacted with human **counterparts** in a film. Although it is standard practice nowadays, the human actors had to **grasp** how to interact with a co-star who would be added later. This development impacted what filmmakers could do with their characters and reshaped how actors trained.

The movie *Civil War* (2024), used video effects (VFX) to modify real environments, turning them into war zones without physically manipulating them. After filming, the creative team added bullet holes and fires where there hadn't been any. They also removed pedestrians and vehicles from shots to create an **eerie**, abandoned quality. This is a **persuasive** example of how filmmakers combine reality with fiction to make anything possible. However, combining practical effects and CGI gives films a realism that is impossible with CGI alone.

03 Read the text again. Write a sample sentence using the words in the box.
Answers will vary.

employ   enhance   counterparts   grasp eerie   persuasive

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

04 With a classmate, discuss the questions below.

› In which movies or scenes does the CGI look realistic?
› In which ones does it look unrealistic?
› How does the (lack of) realism impact your experience?

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Language Structures and Functions Tip

For Exercise 6
Before class, write the sentence halves and paste them around the classroom. Then, tell students to complete Exercise 6 with a classmate. Next, write the following scenarios on the board and have students turn them into conditional sentences in their notebooks. Possible scenarios: 1. *The actors didn't look natural performing with a computer-generated character. 2. The director didn't have much experience with CGI, so the special effects were lacking. 3. The CGI budget is small, so the company that will do the graphics is not very experienced.* Finally, if time allows and you deem necessary, review the grammar point in more detail.

Teaching Tip

For Exercise 7
Before class, find or write a movie review of a popular movie and make a copy for each student. Then, in class, provide students with the movie review. Tell them to read it and identify the content in each paragraph. Next, ask them to work with a classmate to outline the key content in a movie review. Encourage students to use the outline to write their movie review. Finally, ask volunteers to share their reviews with the rest of the class.

Differentiation Strategy

For Exercise 8
Go to the Differentiation Strategies Bank and adapt this exercise using Strategy 9.

Wrap-up

After Exercise 8, ask students to give their honest opinions about the use of technology in film by discussing the following questions: 1. *How does technology in cinema add to the viewing experience? 2. How does it take away from it? 3. In your opinion, how can directors strike the perfect balance, using just the right amount of technology in films?* Finally, ask volunteers to share their answers with the class.

Flexi Exercises
(To adjust to students' needs, you can either use or not the activities below)

For Exercise 5

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05 Circle the option that completes the sentences.

1. If George Lucas **used** / **had used** / **would have used** CGI in the first *Star Wars*, he would have impressed audiences even more.

2. It **would be** / **were** / **would have been** impossible to make *Terminator 2* if CGI hadn't existed.

3. I **would learn** / **learned** / **was learning** how to use animation software if I had the time.

4. If Walt Disney **had created** / **hadn't created** / **didn't create** a studio, we wouldn't have Mickey Mouse now.

5. If you hadn't told me that scene used CGI, I **wouldn't** / **didn't** / **don't** have a clue.

6. The director wouldn't use CGI if the studio **doesn't force** / **forced** / **didn't force** her to.

06 Match the example sentences to their meanings.

1. I would have enjoyed the movie more if it had used more CGI.
2. I would have enjoyed the movie more if it hadn't used as much CGI.
3. If CGI hadn't been invented in the 1990s, we wouldn't use it now.
4. If CGI were invented now, it wouldn't have been used in films from the 1990s.
5. If directors used more CGI, they would save money on big acting salaries.
6. If directors used less CGI, they would save money on computer engineers' salaries.

a. The movie overused CGI.
b. The movie didn't use enough CGI.
c. CGI is used now, but not in the past.
d. CGI wasn't used before the 1990s.
e. Directors spend a lot of money on engineers' salaries.
f. Directors spend a lot of money on actors' salaries.

07 Write a movie review describing the impact of technology on the film. Use at least two examples of conditionals. Follow the example.
Answers will vary.

It would have been more realistic if the movie had contained less CGI.

08 In a small group, organize a panel of film experts in which you argue about the artistic benefits of using technology in film. Each of you should take on one of the roles on the right.

› a film director who believes that special effects enhance artistic creativity
› a producer who appreciates saving money by using special effects
› a movie reviewer who believes that technology has its place, but is overused in Hollywood
› an out-of-work actor who thinks that CGI is taking away acting jobs