



Hollywood

Hollywood - the place where magic comes alive and dreams can come true if films are to be believed. The idea of a modern cinema was originally created in France by Auguste and Louis Lumière, but it was America that drove it forward and made it famous across the world. At the centre of it all was a small neighbourhood in Los Angeles. Hollywood didn't even exist until the end of the 19th century.

SMALL BEGINNINGS

It all began when a politician named Harvey Henry Wilcox bought an area of land west of Hollywood and eventually turned it into a series of large, expensive homes. By 1902 it was a thriving community and was ready for another developer to step in - H. J. Whitley. He soon became known as the Father of Hollywood.

Whitley opened the Hollywood Hotel, which became the Dolby Theater, where they host Oscar ceremonies. When Hollywood became part of Los Angeles in 1910, the main road became the now-famous Hollywood Boulevard. This is the road that is paved with gold stars that celebrate famous Hollywood celebrities.

EARLY FILMS

By that point, Hollywood was already becoming the centre of the film industry. The Count of Monte Cristo was released in 1908 - the first film to be completed in Hollywood (filming began in Chicago). In Old California was released in 1910 and became the first film shot entirely in Hollywood. The first major studio (a company that produces films) moved to Hollywood a year later and most had moved there by 1915. There were three reasons that made Hollywood so popular with film companies - the predictable warm weather meant that filming outside was possible all-year-round, the diverse landscape of the area meant that many different types of film could be produced and the third, and perhaps most important, was to do with the law. Thomas Edison held the rights to lots of inventions essential to the cinema with his company called the Motion Picture Patents Company. Anybody who wanted to produce films had to pay to use his ideas. However, local laws meant that he couldn't sue them in Hollywood, so producers were free to make their films without Edison's extortionate fees.

THE GOLDEN AGE

When the Golden Age of American cinema began is often debated. Some say it started when silent cinema ended, others include silent movies in the Golden Age. Whenever it began, it was an era in which cinema grew to unprecedented levels. The 1920s saw films spreading across the world, and Hollywood actors soon became international stars. This was the time when people such as Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers became famous.

The Golden Age was the first time that movie producers could include sound, and suddenly whole new genres began to grow. Westerns, musicals and horror films all got their start in the Golden Age of Hollywood. During this time, five big studios dominated Hollywood: Warner Brothers, RKO, Fox, MGM and Paramount. Universal was still only a small studio at the time.

Hollywood hit the peak of its Golden Age in 1930 when up to 80 million Americans went to the movies each week.

BLOCKBUSTERS

Modern Hollywood films aim to become a blockbuster - a film made with a big budget and big stars, and that makes a lot of money. The idea of a blockbuster began in the late 1970s with the creation of computer special effects. Films such as Jaws, Star Wars and Indiana Jones saw record numbers of ticket sales and revitalised the industry.





1

What was early Hollywood like?

Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Impression	Evidence
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3 marks

2

a) Which was the first film to be shot entirely in Hollywood?

1 mark

b) Why did so many film companies film in Hollywood? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. **Give two reasons.**

2 marks





3

a) What was the early, popular period of American cinema called?

1 mark

b) Why was it called this? **Give two reasons.**

2 marks

4

Look at the section headed: **Blockbusters.**

Which of the following are essential for a film to be classed as a blockbuster?

Tick **one**.

Set outside

Have lots of cars

Cost a lot to make

Take a long time to film

1 mark



SATs Practice - Answers

1. **Give 1 mark for two correct impressions. Give an extra 1 mark for each correct use of evidence from the text.**
It was only for the rich
Wilcox built large and expensive homes
It was very successful
It became a thriving community
It eventually had its own hotel
2. a) In Old California
b) **Give 1 mark each (to a maximum of 2 marks) for any of the following:**
Predictable weather
Diverse landscape
It was legal to use the technology there
3. a) The Golden Age
b) **1 mark for each correct answer (to a maximum of 2) from:**
Films spread across the world
Hollywood actors became celebrities and stars for the first time
Sound was included for the first time
Many big studios that we know today, began then
4. Cost a lot to make