




# The Prince of Animators: Hayao Miyazaki



Read line 5. The word 'they' refers to \_\_\_\_\_.

➤ To know which noun a pronoun refers to, look for a possible noun in the previous few sentences. Then replace the pronoun with the proposed noun in each option to see if the sentence makes sense.

- A. the aircrafts (aircrafts are non-living things that cannot live or move by themselves ➤ ✗)
- B. Katsuji Miyazaki and his father (Katsuji's father is not mentioned in the text ➤ ✗)
- C. Hayao Miyazaki ('They' is a plural pronoun ➤ ✗)
- D. Hayao Miyazaki and his family (the people mentioned are Miyazaki and his family members ➤ ✓)

Let's think! 

1. Do you like reading manga? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever watched the animations of Hayao Miyazaki?

Hayao Miyazaki is a world-renowned Japanese animator, manga artist, screenwriter and filmmaker. He was born, as the second of four sons in his family, in Tokyo on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1941 during World War II. As it progressed, his father Katsuji Miyazaki, an engineer, became a maker of aircrafts parts. At that tumultuous time, they first lived in Tokyo but then moved to other places. When Miyazaki was four years old, he witnessed the bombing in Utsunomiya, which had a profound and long-lasting impact on his life. 5

When Miyazaki was a child, he loved reading, especially reading manga. He read many of them and dreamt of becoming a manga artist at first. Later, during his high school years, Miyazaki developed a keener interest in animation making when he happened to see *Panda and the Magic Serpent*, the first colour animated film in Japan. This strongly impressed him as he had never seen such vivid characters before. After high school, Miyazaki attended Gakushuin University, where he joined a club called 'Children's Literature Research Club'. It was similar to a comic club nowadays. Meanwhile, he often spent time with his art teacher from high school, sketching in his teacher's studio. 10 15

Having completed his tertiary education in 1963, Miyazaki started his career in animation. He worked for Toei Animation, which was a large Japanese animation studio. Then, in the following years, he worked for a few other animation studios and had the chance to be involved in the production of several animation series and films. In 1984, Miyazaki made the film *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, which became one of his most popular science fiction animated films. This also cemented his reputation as an animator. 20 25

## More to Take Away

Hayao Miyazaki, owing to his father's profession, had many opportunities to see military equipment. This inspired his creation of artworks, in which military-related items (e.g. guns, tanks, aircrafts) could often be found. Although Hayao is fascinated with military equipment, he is opposed to wars.

After the success of *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, Miyazaki and his former colleagues co-founded an animation studio called Studio Ghibli. The studio produced an enviable number of popular animated films, including the highest-grossing ones released in Japan. In 1986, it first produced *Castle in the Sky*, of which Miyazaki was both the director and screenwriter. The story is about the adventures of two children trying to keep a magic crystal from the military while searching for a mystical drifting castle in the sky. Then he wrote and directed a list of animated films including *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988), *Spirited Away* (2001) and *The Wind Rises* (2013). *My Neighbour Totoro* is about two sisters encountering forest spirits in postwar Japan. *Spirited Away* tells the story of a young girl who enters the world of spirits and tries to free herself and save her parents, who are turned into pigs by a witch. *The Wind Rises* is about a boy dreaming of the day he could design and fly an aircraft. Currently, Miyazaki is preparing for *How do you live?*, a new animated film set to hit the screen around 2020 summer.

Miyazaki's great success in animated films is internationally recognised. Miyazaki received the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement Award at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Venice International Film Festival in 2005. He was also awarded the Academy Honorary Award for his contributions to animation and films in 2014. When asked about his masterpieces, he asserted, 'All my films are my children.'

~520 words

According to the biography, at what age did Miyazaki start to work in Toei Animation?

- ▶ According to line 3, Miyazaki was born on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1941.
  - ▶ According to line 19, Miyazaki completed his tertiary education in 1963.
  - ▶ According to lines 19-20, it is implied that Miyazaki worked for Toei Animation in the same year he graduated.
  - ▶  $1963 - 1941 = 22$
- A. 20       B. 22  
 C. 31       D. 43



Frame rate (that is, the number of images displayed per second) plays an important role in animation.

The higher the frame rate, the more likely our brain perceives the images as an animation.

### Looking into Grammar

In relative clauses, 'where' and 'which' are used to join two sentences that refer to the same place. 'Where' replaces the place mentioned, while 'which' replaces the subject or the object in the clause. Do not put a subject pronoun or an object pronoun after 'which'.

- ✓ I went to a grocery store **where** the goods are cheap (~~✗ there~~).
- ✓ I went to a grocery store **which** (~~✗ it~~) offers good deals.
- ✓ I went to a grocery store **which** a lot of people visit (~~✗ it~~).

🔍 Circle an example each of 'where' and 'which' in paragraphs 2 and 3.


## Part A Multiple Choice Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the biography. Choose the best answer by blackening the appropriate circle.

1. Read paragraph 1. Which of the following adjectives best describes Hayao Miyazaki's early childhood?

- A. traumatic
- B. unstable
- C. safe
- D. boring

1 Miyazaki needed to move to different cities during World War II.

 2. Read line 13. The word 'This' refers to \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. animation making
- B. high school education
- C. the first colour animated film
- D. manga

3. In line 14, the word 'impressed' can best be replaced by '\_\_\_\_\_'.  
\_\_\_\_\_

- A. encouraged
- B. influenced
- C. amazed
- D. inspired

4. Which of the following is TRUE about the film *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*?

- A. It was the first animated film in which Miyazaki was involved.
- B. It was produced by Toei Animation.
- C. It made Miyazaki famous in the industry.
- D. It was a science fiction film released in 1963.


5. In line 28, the word 'co-founded' means \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. shut down abruptly
- B. started jointly
- C. joined at the same time
- D. examined together

6. From paragraph 4, we can infer that Studio Ghibli's films are mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. children's adventures
- B. spiritual beings
- C. animal kingdoms
- D. aircraft manufacturers

6 Read through the paragraph and generalise about the plots of the films.

 7. At what age did Miyazaki receive the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement Award?

- A. 46
- B. 62
- C. 64
- D. 70



Please scan the QR code on P.6 to access the checklist for evaluating your own reading progress.

## Part B Pre-HKDSE Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the biography. For question 4, answer in a complete sentence.

1. Match the subheadings below to the corresponding paragraphs in the biography. Write the correct numbers in the boxes.

(i) Representative Works

(ii) Work Experience

(iii) Student Days

(iv) Early Life

(v) Major Achievements



2. Look at the following pronouns and answer who/what they refer to in the biography.

Pronoun	Line	Reference
them	line 10	(i)
ones	line 31	(ii)
it	line 31	(iii)

**2** Pay attention to the context of the sentence. Then substitute the pronouns with your answers to see if they make sense.

3. Determine whether each of the following statements is true, false, or undecidable because not enough information is given.

Statement	True	False	Not Given
(i) <i>Panda and the Magic Serpent</i> was the first animated film in Japan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(ii) The first production of Studio Ghibli was <i>Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind</i> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) All of the films Miyazaki directed were box-office hits.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



4. For how many decades has Hayao Miyazaki been participating in animation-making?

---



---

**4** A decade refers to a period of ten years. Do some calculation to work out the answer.

**DSE**

Level Up



Q3 Any missing or extra word may affect the meaning of a statement. Now, read paragraphs 2-4 again and answer the following question.

According to the biography, how many films has Miyazaki directed? \_\_\_\_\_

## Part C Vocabulary Bank

Label the photos in the flow chart below with the names of film genres from the word box.

adventure

comedy

horror

science fiction (Sci-Fi)

crime

romance

documentary

action

**BEGIN HERE!**

Welcome to the cinema! We're here to help you choose the right film genre. All you need to do is answer a few questions. First of all, do you prefer non-fiction films to fiction films? (Fiction: stories based on imaginary characters and events)

→ No

→ Yes

Are you coming with your spouse?

Do you expect to laugh a lot?

Do you enjoy being scared?

Are you a science lover?

Do you like solving mysteries?

Are you a fan of martial arts?

Fancy a love story?

2.

4.

1.

3.

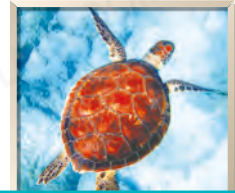
5.



6.



7.



8.

## Part D Cloze Passage

Complete the film review excerpts below with the appropriate nouns introduced on the previous page.

‘It is common to see elements of (1) \_\_\_\_\_ in films of other genres, especially in (2) \_\_\_\_\_ films. That’s because these are usually about imaginative topics such as space exploration and artificial intelligence, often filled with dull dialogues or jargon that may leave the audience feeling drowsy. Therefore, having something that makes people laugh can help entertain and attract more filmgoers. Just like this newly released film, *Black*. While the confusing relationship between humans and the automatons there is thought-provoking, the hilarious way in which it is presented makes it even more enjoyable...’

‘Although many people love watching (3) \_\_\_\_\_ films, they are not my cup of tea. They are too unrealistic and usually have similar storylines. One of the commonest patterns is that the male protagonist falls in love with the female protagonist at first sight. She is then diagnosed with a terminal disease just when their relationship blossoms. Boring! To me, (4) \_\_\_\_\_ films are much more interesting. They educate us about factual events and people. You can learn more about how the past has shaped our modern society by watching them...’

‘It is a mistake to produce a (5) \_\_\_\_\_ film as just another (6) \_\_\_\_\_ film. In such a film, violent gangsters are always fighting among themselves and chasing after one another. Is it not possible to include some psychological conflicts commonly experienced by law-breakers or wrong-doers?...’

‘Of all the major film genres, (7) \_\_\_\_\_ is perhaps the least popular one. There are, after all, a great number of people who are afraid of the supernatural. To appeal to them (and those who want excitement), film producers are now turning increasingly to (8) \_\_\_\_\_ films with thrilling elements embedded...’

### Word Craft

**Award (Refer to P.11.)**

**e.g.** receive an **award**  
win an **award**  
earn an **award**  
accept an **award**

### Let's Discuss!

1. What do you think about non-fiction films?
2. Do you agree that non-fiction films can inspire self-reflection?