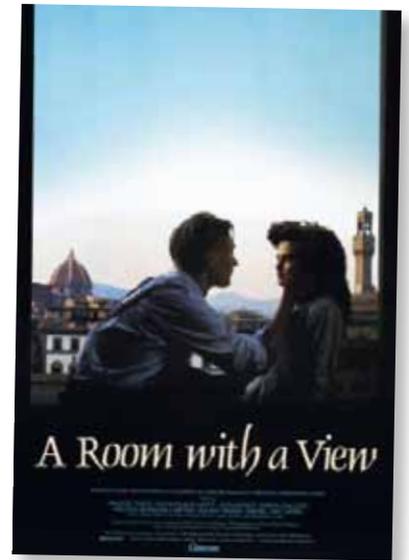


A Room with a View

Before you read

1 *A Room with a View* is a famous novel and film. How much do you know about the book? Read the statements and write T (True) or F (False).

- 1 *A Room with a View* is a love story. _____
- 2 The author is Jane Austen. _____
- 3 The story takes place in Italy. _____
- 4 The book is set in the future. _____
- 5 The book has a happy ending. _____



Reading

2 Now read the background and plot information and check your answers to exercise 1.



Background

A Room with a View is a 1908 novel by English writer E. M. Forster about a young woman, Lucy, in Edwardian England, when women had little freedom. Set in Italy and England, it is both a romance and a critique of English society at the beginning of the 20th century. The author shows his own hopes for society by ending the book with Lucy choosing her own path – a free life with the man she loves.



The Plot

(1) Lucy Honeychurch is on a tour of Florence with her snobbish cousin, Charlotte Bartlett. They are disappointed because their rooms at the *pensione* do not have a view. Then they meet Mr Emerson and his handsome, dreamy son, George, who offer to give up their rooms with a view for the ladies. Without letting Lucy speak, Miss Bartlett refuses the offer, looking down on the Emersons because they are not middle-class.

(2) The next day, Lucy goes on a tour of Florence and in Santa Croce she meets the Emersons again. Lucy likes them and continues to bump into them in Florence. One afternoon, Lucy sees a murder in Florence. George Emerson is nearby and catches her when she faints. They have an intimate conversation. After this, Lucy decides to avoid George because she is confused by her feelings and because she wants to keep her cousin happy.



(3) Later on in the week, the Emersons, Miss Bartlett, Lucy and others go to Fiesole. In the fields, Lucy and George kiss, but Lucy's cousin sees them and gets very angry. The two women leave for Rome the next day before Lucy is able to say goodbye to George.

(4) In Rome, Lucy spends time with Cecil Vyse, an aristocratic friend from England. Cecil is a wealthy Londoner – he is a snob. He asks Lucy to marry him, but she rejects him. In England, Cecil proposes again and this time she accepts.

The Emersons come back from Italy and rent a house near Lucy's house. George meets Lucy alone and kisses her again. Lucy tells George to leave and never return. George argues with her, saying that Cecil only sees her as an 'object for the shelf' and will never love her enough to give her independence, while George loves her for who she is; and she knows in her heart that this is true...



3 Read the plot again and match the paragraphs (1-4) with the photographs (A-D) on this page.

4 P Read the sentences below and choose the correct answer (✓).

- Lucy and Charlotte are unhappy because...
 - they don't like Italy.
 - they don't like their hotel room.
 - the weather is not nice.
- What does Miss Bartlett think about the Emersons?
 - She thinks they are very generous.
 - She thinks they have too much money.
 - She thinks they are not good enough for her.
- Why does Lucy want to avoid George?
 - She doesn't like him.
 - Her cousin will be angry.
 - He behaves in a strange way.
- What do we know about Cecil?
 - He wants to marry Lucy.
 - He is in love with Lucy.
 - He needs money.
- In the end, what is important for Lucy?
 - her personal freedom
 - having enough money
 - people's opinion of her

Listening

5  **8** Listen to a scene from *A Room with a View* and answer these questions.

- Where does the dialogue take place?
- Where is the *Signora* from?
- What do the ladies want to see from their window?
- What is the relationship between the two men?
- What do the ladies want to do the next day?

6  **8 P** Listen to the dialogue again and complete this summary.

Lucy and Charlotte are staying in a hotel in (1) _____. They are having their (2) _____ and talking. They want to change their rooms because they do not have a (3) _____ of the river. There are two men staying in the same hotel. They have good (4) _____ and they are happy to change them with the ladies' rooms. Charlotte refuses their offer: they will (5) _____ the hotel the next day.

Speaking

7 Imagine you are going to make a film of *A Room with a View*. Answer these questions.

- Where are you going to film the scenes?
- Which actors are going to play the main characters?
- What time of year will you film?

- What music will you choose for the soundtrack?
- What colours will you use?
- What costumes will the characters wear?

8 What themes do you think the book is about? Why? Think about the following topics and discuss them in pairs.

- Class differences: the rich and the poor.
- The importance of love in our lives.
- Freedom and equality of men and women.
- The beauty of Italy.
- The differences between Italy and England.

A I think the book is about class differences.

B Why?

A Because Charlotte is a snob...

STUDY SKILLS

Reading aloud

Reading aloud (from a book, a newspaper, the Internet) is a useful skill. It helps you practise clear pronunciation. Here are some tips to help you when reading aloud.

- Put the stress on main words, for example nouns: This is my son; his name's George. He has a view too.
- Stress words you want to contrast: You can have our rooms, and we'll have yours.
- Stress the last main word in the sentence: Thank you very much indeed; that is out of the question.

9 Practise reading this dialogue with a partner.

Old man This is my son; his name's George. He has a view too.

Charlotte Ah...

Old man I mean, you can have our rooms, and we'll have yours. We'll change.

Charlotte Thank you very much indeed; that is out of the question.

Old man But why? Women like looking at a view; men don't. George, persuade them!

Writing

10 Write the dialogue between Lucy and George in one of the following scenes. Then read your dialogue out to the class. Can they guess which scene you chose?

- He tries to persuade her to change rooms.
- He picks her up when she faints in the street.
- Before they kiss in the corn field.
- He tries to persuade that Cecil doesn't really love her.