



Absolute Beginner S1

Out for a Cantonese Movie

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Traditional Chinese

一齊睇戲啊？
咩戲啊？
2012。
好啊。

Jyutping

jat1 cai4 tai2 hei3 aa1 ?
me1 hei3 aa3 ?
ji6 ling4 jat1 ji6.
hou2 aa3.

English

Let's go see a movie?
What movie?
"2012."
Sounds good.

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Vocabulary

Traditional	Jyutping	English
想	soeng2	to want
睇戲	tai2 hei3	to watch a movie
行街	hang4 gai1	to walk in the street (literally)
食飯	sik6 faan6	to have a meal
飲茶	jam2 caa4	to have Cantonese brunch
飲嘢	jam2 je5	to have a drink
買嘢	maai5 je5	to go shopping
兜風	dau1 fung1	to have a joyride

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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我想飲酒。 不如睇戲? 男人唔鍾意行街。	ngo5 soeng2 jam2 zau2。 bat1 jyu4 tai2 hei3? naam4 jan2 m4 zung1 ji3 hang4 gai1。	I want to drink alcohol. How about seeing a movie? Men don't like shopping.
今晚去餐廳食飯。	gam1 maan5 heoi3 caan1 teng1 sik6 faan6。	Tonight (I'll) eat at a restaurant.
我同爺爺去飲茶。	ngo5 tung4 je4 je2 heoi3 jam2 caa4。	I have Cantonese brunch with my grandpa.
今晚去飲嘢啦!	gam1 maan5 heoi3 jam2 je5 laa1!	Let's go drink tonight!
女仔鍾意買嘢。	nei5 zai2 zung1 ji3 maai5 je5。	Girls like shopping.
得閒去兜風。	dak1 haan4 heoi3 dau1 fung1 。	(When you/I) have time, go have a joyride.

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Comparing 想 and 要 (soeng2 and jiu1)

一齊睇戲啊?

jat1 cai4 tai2 hei3 aa1 ?

"Let's go see a movie?"

In previous lessons, we have covered the verb for "to want" (要, jiu3). You can negate this verb by adding 唔 to make 唔要. If you want to ask someone if he or she wants something, you can reduplicate the verb: 要唔要 (jiu3 m4 jiu3).

There is another verb in Cantonese that is similar to yet different from 要. This verb is 想 (soeng2). While this verb also functions as "to want," it can also mean "to think," or "to wish." You can also reduplicate this verb as in 想唔想 (soeng2 m4 soeng2) - "to think or not to think," "to feel or not to feel".

For Example:

1. 你想唔想食飯?

nei5 soeng2 m4 soeng2 sik6 faan6

"Do you want to have dinner?"

Remember that you can replace 想 with 要: 要唔要一齊食飯 (jiu3 m4 jiu3 jat1 cai4 sik6 faan6). The meaning is still the same but is a little more direct.

要 connotes more of a set plan, whereas 想 implies a desire for something that is not quite concrete.

Cultural Insight

Hong Kong Film Industry

The Cantonese film industry is a hotbed of artistic talent and creativity for all of Asia. Hong Kong functions as a filmmaking hub for the greater Chinese speaking world due to the higher degree of economic and political freedom when compared with the mainland. The Hong Kong film industry is heavily commercialized with a highly corporate structure, mainly making movies that are crowd pleasers. Movie stars are groomed from TV farm leagues, and many pop stars enjoy acting careers and vice-versa.

Hong Kong films are relatively low budget when compared with American movies. Most budgets will cost around one million USD, while a Jackie Chan or Stephen Chow movie may cost around twenty million USD. Dubbing is one of the most recognizable traits of earlier Hong Kong films. To save time and money, films were shot without sound and dubbing, which would be added in later, sometimes without the original actors' voices. This worked well in a couple of ways because films could easily have another language added in for export.

Another feature of Hong Kong films is the subtitling of all movies. This was a result of a 1963 law put in place by the British government to keep an eye on political content. The original law was to subtitle into English, but at the same time, Chinese subtitles were added, which added to the mobility of movies throughout the Chinese speaking diasporas.

By the end of the 1970s, Golden Harvest studio has cemented its status as Hong Kong's premier film studio, pioneering new ground in Kung Fu movies and signing new talents like Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan.

By the 1990s, Hong Kong's film industry had stagnated due to falling ticket prices and the Asian financial crisis along with the handover to mainland China in 1997. Currently, Hong Kong films are finding a large market in mainland China's cinemas. Box office hits like *Overheard* (2009) are cementing Hong Kong's staying power in the Asian movie market.