

## 'Slumdog Millionaire'

A new 'feel-good' film is winning awards, but does it capture the spirit of the 'new' India?

- 1 What is a 'feel-good' film? Have you seen the film 'Slumdog Millionaire'?
- 2 Practise saying the figures in the box aloud to a partner.

18	4	50	10	1,000,000
£50 million		£7 million		20 million

**Slum:** a poor area of a town where the houses are in very bad condition.  
(Definition from *Macmillan English Dictionary* © Macmillan Publishers 2007)

- 3 Read the article and guess the missing figures (a–g) from exercise two. There is one extra figure.

All eyes are on India. Last year, an unknown author Arvind Adiga won the Man Booker Prize with his first novel, *White Tiger*. The hero of the novel starts life as a poor man, becomes a taxi driver, and then goes to Bangalore where he is soon in charge of a successful business based in a call centre. It is a novel about entrepreneurial India. It is a 'rags-to-riches' story.

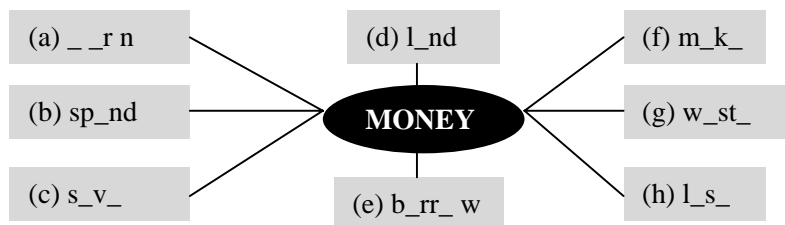
*Slumdog Millionaire* is another 'rags-to-riches' story. It was directed by Danny Boyle, whose first film 'Shallow Grave' was about a group of people in Scotland who found a dead man – and a lot of money. What should they do with the money – keep it and spend it? Or give it to the police?

*Slumdog Millionaire* was made on a budget of (a) \_\_\_\_\_. By the third week of January, it was estimated to have taken (b) \_\_\_\_\_ at the box office. It tells the story of (c) \_\_\_ year-old Jamal Malik. He grew up the slums of Mumbai. The film has

some wonderful child actors. The money they earned has been placed in a trust fund for when they are older.

Jamal is taking part in the Indian version of the well-known television quiz 'Who wants to be a millionaire?'. Could a boy with no education win the first prize of (d) \_\_\_\_\_ rupees? We have all at some time or another dreamt about becoming rich overnight. The format of the show has spread all over the world and the language in it is now famous: '50-(e) \_\_\_' / 'phone a friend' / 'final answer?'.  
The film is not without its critics. Some people object to the way that poverty is shown: 'poverty-chic'. They say this romanticises poverty. Others have criticised the film for not showing the progress made by India. But audiences worldwide have been greatly excited. The film has won (f) \_\_\_ Golden Globes and has been nominated for an incredible (g) \_\_\_ Oscars. If you haven't seen it, go now!

- 4 Read the whole article. What is the film 'Slumdog Millionaire' about? Why has it been criticised?
- 5 Replace the missing vowels in the words (a–h) below. Create sentences with some of the collocations with the word 'money' about your own life.



- 6 (a) Decide what you would do if you won: (i) £1,000 (ii) £10,000 (iii) a million pounds. Tell the group.  
(b) Do you know any real-life 'rags-to-riches' stories concerning entrepreneurs or successful business people? Tell the other students in your group the story.