

Task 2

Find words in the text to match the following definitions

Paragraph 8

Adopt a new citizenship _____

Paragraph 9

To do physical exercise _____

Write down the names of Arnold Schwarzenegger's films that you have already seen.

Which one did you like most? _____

Write the name of the principal characters _____

Write the synthesis of the plot _____

Write a description of the most exciting scene _____

Time to read!

Match the name of the film with each poster



Time to read ! (2)

Match the name of the film with each poster.

1) Dick Tracy

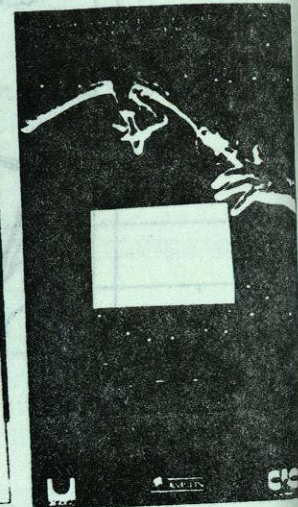
2) Pretty Woman

3) E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial

4) Home Alone

5) Goodfellas

6) It



Read the following text as quickly as you can and tick (✓) the right completion:

The text is about:

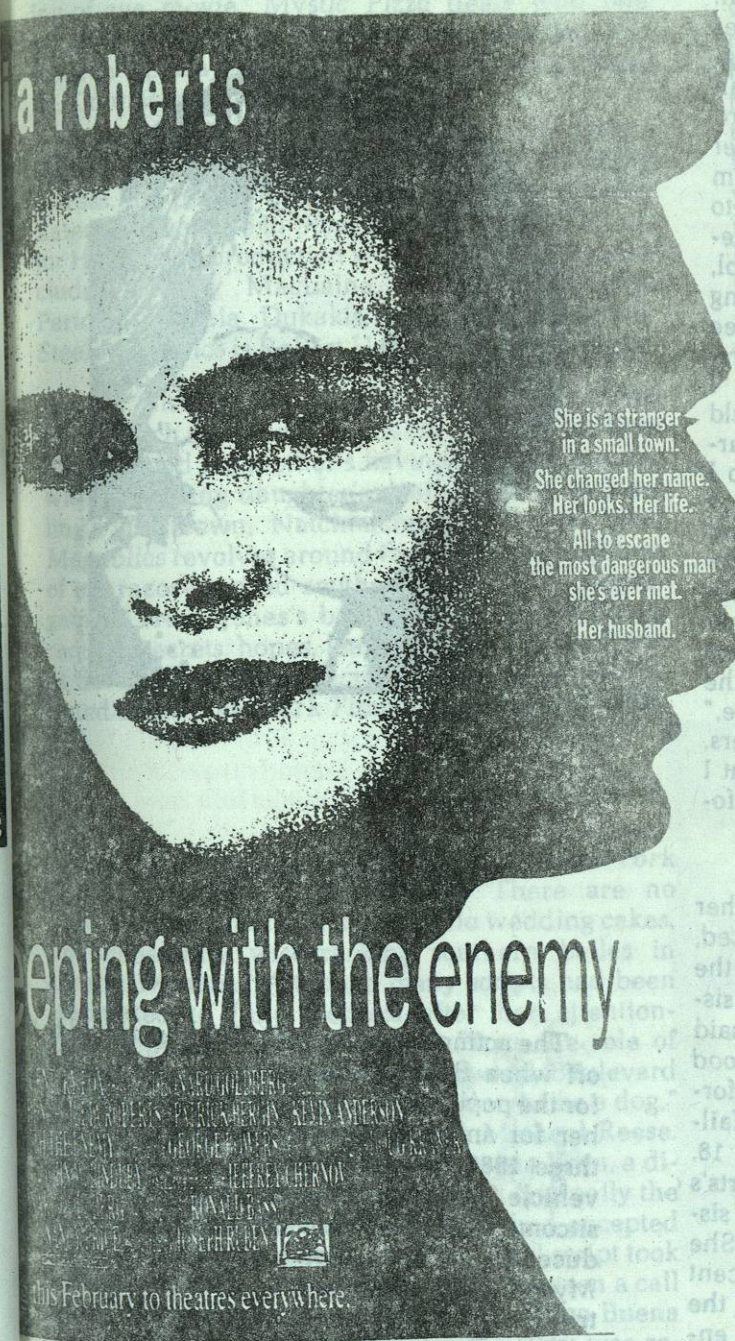
- the movie "Pretty Woman."
- how films are made.
- the personal and professional life of a movie star.

The text probably comes from:

- a TV guide.
- biographies of famous people.
- a local daily newspaper.

Roberts, Julia

Oct. 28, 1967 - Actress. Address: c/o Paramount Pictures Corp., 15 Columbus Circle, New York, N.Y. 10023



She is a stranger in a small town.
She changed her name. Her looks. Her life.
All to escape the most dangerous man she's ever met.
Her husband.

In the scant three years that have passed since she made her film debut in *Blood Red* and appeared in *Pretty Woman*—a modern version of the Pygmalion myth that became one of the top-grossing films of 1990—Julia Roberts made a meteoric transition from a promising ingénue to a \$1-million-a-picture superstar who may develop into one of the biggest box-office draws in Hollywood history. The twenty-three-year-old actress has been breathlessly described as having "Sophia Loren's exotic good looks, Geena Davis's gangly sexiness, Monroe's vulnerability, Hayworth's sophistication," and, in the opinion of the director Garry Marshall, "possibly the longest legs since Wilt Chamberlain." Even though she received little formal training in acting, Julia Roberts is known for the emotional intensity with which she invests her performances, an investment that brought her dividends in the form of two Golden Globe awards, one Oscar nomination as best actress for her portrayal of a highly educable hooker in *Pretty Woman*, and another Oscar nomination for her contribution as support-actress in *Steel Magnolias*.

2 Julia Roberts was born in Smyrna, Georgia, a town not very far from Atlanta, on October 28, 1967, the youngest of the three children of Betty Roberts and Walter Roberts. Both her brother, Eric, and her sister, Lisa, are also actors, and it seemed inevitable that Julia would also inherit what her mother has called "the family disease." During the 1960s Betty and Walter Roberts operated a workshop for actors and playwrights in Atlanta. Although Julia recalled in an interview with Ryan Murohy for the *Chicago Tribune* (August 17, 1990) that she "had small parts in their plays at a very early age," her mother told interviewers for *People* magazine (September 17, 1990) that, while Lisa and Eric wanted to become actors from the very beginning, "all Julie ever talked about was being a veterinarian." In paying tribute to her parents during an interview with Michael Reese of *Newsweek* (March 26, 1990), Julia Roberts said: "My dad ended up selling vacuum cleaners, and my mom got a job as a secretary. They never got rich and they never got famous, but they showed me that you do things for a purpose, and if it treats you well, then all the better. But if it goes away, you won't die. You just move on." Her childhood was not without its hardships: her parents were divorced in 1971, and her father died when she was eight.

3 Her only public performance when Julia Roberts was in high school was a mock presidential election, in which she took the part of Elizabeth Hanford Dole, the Republican government official. She first developed an interest in the possibilities of film as an art form when one of her favorite English teachers screened the film version of Jean Anouilh's *Becket*, with Peter O'Toole and Richard Burton, in class. "Julie could be real creative," her friend Joan Raley told the interviewers from *People*. "She could muster up tears in a second to get out of homeroom." Just three days after she received her diploma from Campbell High School, she moved to New York City, intent on becoming an actress. "I had convinced myself that I had three choices," she said in an interview with Myra Forsberg for the *New York Times* (March 18, 1990). "I could get married, I could go to college, or I could move to New York. Nobody was asking to get married, and I didn't want to go away to school, so I moved." Her brother, Eric, who had appeared in *The Pope of Greenwich Village* and *Star 80* and who had received an Oscar nomination in 1985 for his part in *Runaway Train*, was already an established screen performer. She moved in with her sister, Lisa, and, at five feet nine inches and 116 pounds, she had no trouble signing up with the Click modeling agency. "Her weight was fine," Frances Grill of Click told the *People* interviewers, "and she has an incredibly photogenic face. But I don't think she really gave it her best shot. Her focus was to become an actress."

4 In 1986 Eric Roberts got his younger sister her first film role, in the low-budget drama *Blood Red*, directed by Eric Masterson. Masterson told the writers for *People*, "Eric just said, 'I've got this sister. It is O.K. if you want my sister?' He just said that she was good." Released until 1989, *Blood Red*, a saga about Italian immigrants in California's Napa Valley in the 1930s, was a dismal failure. Although a reviewer for *Variety* (April 18, 1990) panned the film, he noted that Eric Roberts's scenes with his real-life sister Julia, cast as his sister, are intriguing because of the visual match. She doesn't get much chance to emoté, but that nascent star quality already is evident." Meanwhile, the acting studios in which Julia Roberts briefly enrolled while living in New York City struck her as being pointless and unhelpful.



JOHN PASCHAL CELEBRITY PHOTO

The acting career of Julia Roberts started off when Bonnie Zimmerman, a casting director for the popular television series *Crime Story*, hired her for an episode. She was also given roles in three 1988 films: *Satisfaction*, an NBC-produced vehicle for Justine Bateman, one of the stars of the sitcom *Family Ties*; *Baja Oklahoma*, a comedy produced for cable television's Home Box Office; and *Mystic Pizza*. *Satisfaction*, which focuses on the trials and tribulations of an all-female rock band and cast Roberts as Daryle Shane, a boy-crazy guitarist, left critics and audiences dissatisfied.

5 In playing the voluptuous Daisy Araujo in *Mystic Pizza*, Julia Roberts used her first substantial film role to good advantage. A whimsical coming-of-age movie, *Mystic Pizza* deals with one summer in the lives of three young women who work in a pizza parlor in the seaport town of Mystic, Connecticut.

On the strength of her performance in *Mystic Pizza*, Julia Roberts won a plum role for a young actress, the part of the saintly but doomed Shelby Eatenton-Lacherie in *Steel Magnolias* (1989), a major Hollywood production with a starry cast that included Shirley MacLaine, Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Olympia Dukakis, and Daryl Hannah. *Steel Magnolias* is Robert Harling's screen adapta-

tion of his semiautobiographical Off-Broadway play, which dealt with the death of his sister from diabetes and his mother's having to come to terms with her young daughter's death. Filmed in Harling's hometown, Natchitoches, Louisiana, *Steel Magnolias* revolves around the comings and goings of six razor-tongued southern ladies who congregate in Truvy Jones's beauty parlor to "exchange recipes, secrets, hopes, fears, and a merciless string of not always great wisecracks," as Vincent Canby noted in the *New York Times* (November 15, 1989).

6 As Myra Forsberg pointed out in her *New York Times* interview with Roberts, "There are no down-home beauticians, armadillo wedding cakes, or incessantly wisecracking southern belles in *Pretty Woman*." Although many scripts had been submitted to Julia Roberts after her attention-getting performance in *Mystic Pizza*, the role of *Pretty Woman*'s Vivian, a Hollywood Boulevard hooker, was one that she "chased down like a dog," as she said in her interview with Michael Reese. Although eventually released by Buena Vista, a division of Disney, *Pretty Woman* was originally the property of another studio. Roberts had accepted the role of Vivian, but the bleak original script took a downbeat view of the relationship between a call girl and a powerful corporate raider. When Buena Vista purchased *Pretty Woman*, the story was rewritten, and Garry Marshall was brought in to direct the film as a light romantic comedy, a

Pygmalion-like love story with Richard Gere cast as the sophisticated but aloof corporate shark. Julia Roberts was forced to persuade Marshall that she was still the right actress to play Vivian, who was now depicted as a funny, sassy hooker-with-a-heart-of-gold. The people at Disney, she explained to Myra Forsberg, "took it on this journey and turned it into this delightful, funny, extremely different story. But it's hard to come around when you've fallen in love with this girl the way she was; it's hard to come around when suddenly you see her crack jokes and stuff. So it was a real mind twist, to see what they were seeing when I was sold on what I had seen before. But I met with Garry, who was witty and clever, and we had a nice time."

Released in March 1990, *Pretty Woman* went on to become the most successful romantic comedy at the box office in recent film history. Although the screen romance between Richard Gere's corporate raider and Julia Roberts's streetwalker was structured on the improbable premise of his having hired her to serve as his escort for one week at a flat fee of \$1,300, the film caught the fancy of the moviegoing public at a time when "romantic yearning [had] replaced frenetic earning as the nation's reigning preoccupation," as Tim Appelo put it in *Entertainment Weekly* (December 26, 1990). *Pretty Woman*, as defined by Caryn James in the *New York Times* (April 22, 1990), "is a funny, appealing fairy tale, in which the prince is a millionaire businessman . . . and the princess happens to be a streetwalker. Much of the film's immense charm comes from Julia Roberts, who makes the prostitute a likable, misled innocent, someone who would just as soon watch *I Love Lucy* as seduce a rich man." Her portrayal of Vivian won

Julia Roberts an Oscar nomination in 1991 for best actress.



7 Later in 1990 Roberts essayed the part of a thoughtful but morbid young woman in James Schumacher's film *Flatliners*, which concerns a group of five medical students who "explore the afterlife by dying for minutes at a time," as Rita Kempley expressed it in the *Washington Post* (August 10, 1990). "Flatline" is a slang term for the horizontal line on an EKG that indicates death, and in the film the five flatliners take turns traveling to the beyond, where each comes face to face with individuals he or she has wronged in the past. The film takes a Gothic turn when, haunted by more than their guilt, the medical students find themselves pursued in reality by the victims of their abuse whom they encountered in the afterlife. "My character is also obsessed with the idea of death," Julia Roberts said when she spoke to Iain Blair of the *Chicago Tribune* (August 8, 1990), "except that she's convinced that the afterlife is a good place. I've always been really curious about what happens when you die. You could come up with a million and one images, and mine are really beautiful images. I don't see all the fire-and-brimstone stuff."



"Somewhere in *Flatliners*," Gary Giddins wrote in the *Village Voice* (August 14, 1990), "is an inherently amusing idea that is never allowed to gesture because the filmmakers are too dim to recognize. They've done a sendup of *Frankenstein* (Universal's, not Shelley's) so humorless you'd think they believe there really are things that man, let alone woman, wasn't meant to meddle in. . . . Julia Roberts had no way of knowing she'd be a star when she told her agent, 'I'll do it—even if death is a living hell.'" Unimpressed, Joe Brown wrote in the *Washington Post* (August 10, 1990): "*Flatliners* is new-age *Nightmare on Elm Street*, with antic propagandist and heavy-handed messages about atonement and reconciliation. . . . Julia Roberts signed to do *Flatliners* before she became a name and, though she's underused, she brings a serene restraint to her role." But his *Washington Post* colleague Rita Kempley found on the same date that *Flatliners* was a "heart-stopping, breathtakingly sumptuous haunted house of a movie that takes where *Dracula* and *Dante* left off and *CPR* began. . . . Ranging from vivid to right over the edge, the performances are in keeping with the psychedelic rococo of the scenery."

8 In *Sleeping with the Enemy* (1991), Julia Roberts undertook the role of Laura Burnley, whose husband loves her passionately but is maniacally possessive and psychotically violent. "Sleeping with the Enemy," Susan Linfield wrote in the *New York Times* (February 3, 1991), "charts Laura's emotional transformation as she escapes from [her husband], moves to Cedar Falls, Iowa, and meets Mr. Right. . . . Eventually, though, she is stalked by [her husband], and their final meeting results in a bloody denouement." In an interview with Iain Blair of the *Chicago Tribune* (January 27, 1991), Roberts categorized *Sleeping with the Enemy* as her "toughest film." "It was very intense," she said, "because of the nature of the material, and there were very few scenes I wasn't in, so essentially I worked nearly every day for over three months, and we had six-day weeks, so it was very tiring. It was emotionally harrowing as well. . . . There were whole weeks where I'd have to arrive on the set, start crying, and be the victim in these terrible fights." "The film," its director, Joseph Ruben, explained to Susan Linfield, "depicts the perverted side of 'I can't live without you.' That's a scary sentiment and probably a dangerous one. . . . [Julia] was already there emotionally when she came on the set, almost to the point of breaking apart. She comes prepared; she comes ready to play."

"When I read a script," Julia Roberts explained to Iain Blair, "I think what I look for is a cross between thrill and fear. It's more an instinct and sense of emotion than anything specific. The movies I've done have all been scripts I read and felt something at that moment, a sense of being scared and challenged just enough to feel I don't quite want to do it, but I realize I have to deep down inside."

9 Journalists who have interviewed Julia Roberts have agreed that she keeps a vigilant watch over her privacy. One of them, Robert Palmer, who spoke with her for the *Guardian* (September 1, 1990), wrote that "everything about her suggests a woman who's sequestered herself behind an invisible privacy shield—one that broadcasts, unostentatiously but firmly, the message 'Don't mess with me.'" According to Palmer, she was once engaged to Dylan McDermott, who portrayed her husband in *Steel Magnolias*, but the engagement was later broken. When not working, she divides her time between a house that she owns in Los Angeles and a ranch in Montana. She would



someday like to appear in a biographical film about Louise Brooks, the sultry and rebellious star of silent films who escaped from Hollywood to Europe. One of her own escapes from Hollywood is the writing of poetry, to which she was introduced in high school by Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

References: *Chicago Tribune* VII p12+ Ag 17 '90 por; *Christian Sci Mon* p10 Ap 27 '90; *N Y Times* II p13+ Je 24 '90 pors; *Rolling Stone* p29+ Ja 12 '89 pors, p4+ Ag 9 '90 pors