



Unit 6: Buddy Films

A Warm up

- ### **1. Who do you think would make good partners for these cops?**



B Vocabulary**1. Match the words from the Academic Word List with their definitions.**

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| a) defeat | <input type="checkbox"/> a way of using humor to show that someone or something is foolish, weak, bad, etc. |
| b) distinguishing | <input type="checkbox"/> the main characters in a movie |
| c) ethnicity | <input type="checkbox"/> a person who has just started a job or activity |
| d) in common | <input type="checkbox"/> shared together |
| e) rookie | <input type="checkbox"/> win a victory over someone or something |
| f) satire | <input type="checkbox"/> a race of people |
| g) protagonists | <input type="checkbox"/> to change something slightly |
| h) tweak | <input type="checkbox"/> making something different or special |

C Discussion

1. Have you ever seen a buddy cop movie?

Buddy Cop conventions:

- There are usually two heroes.
- The heroes are usually from different backgrounds.
- One hero is usually "wild", the other a bit calmer.
- Often the two heroes don't get along at the beginning of the movie, but gradually start to respect each other.
- Successful buddy cop movies often have sequels

"fish out of water"

An idiom used to describe a person who is in an unnatural and uncomfortable environment.

D While Reading

Complete the following exercises while reading the article on the next page.

1. Fill in the blanks with the words from the vocabulary exercise.

Good Cop, Bad Cop

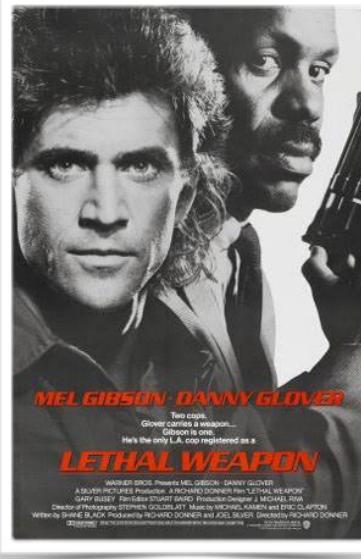
A buddy film is a movie involving two people of very different personalities who are forced to work together to solve a crime and

_____ criminals. These partners learn to respect each other and eventually become friends by the end of the film. The two _____ are usually policemen, but some movies that are not about cops may still be called "buddy films".

Buddy films became popular in the 80's with movies such as *48 Hours* (1982), but the origin of this genre is often considered to be Akira Kurosawa's Japanese film *Stray Dog* (野良犬) (1949).

Frequently, although not always, the two heroes are from different cultural backgrounds, as in the film *Rush Hour* (1998). However, regardless of _____, the main difference is usually that one is wilder than the other: a crazy "hotshot" is paired with a calmer partner. Often the wilder partner is the younger of the two, with the older partner having more patience and experience. The best example of these conventional characters can be seen in the *Lethal Weapon* (1987) movies.

Another frequent convention of this genre is for one of the men to be out of his natural environment: sometimes one of the characters is in a foreign country or new city (*Red Heat*, 1988), or he is a _____ or non-cop partner who is not used to police work. This is called a "fish out of water" plot.



When this convention is present in a buddy cop movie, the other partner usually acts as a guide for the "new guy".

Another _____ feature of these films is that the partners always seem to get in trouble with their own police department, as well as the bad guys.

As buddy-cop movies became more and more popular, movie studios tried to _____ this successful formula. Now the buddies don't always have to be cops. Sometimes they are spies (*Spies Like Us*, 1985), alien hunters (*Men In Black*, 1997), or even garbage collectors (*Men at Work*, 1990). Sometimes only one partner will be a cop and the other will be a bad guy (*Midnight Run*, 1988), or an actor (*The Hard Way*, 1991), or even a dog (*Turner and Hooch*, 1989). The one thing these films have _____ is the tension between the two partners.

Buddy cop movies are often crossbred with other film genres, most often comedy (*Beverly Hills Cop* 1984), but also with science fiction (*Men in Black* 1997), and even historical films (*Shanghai Noon* 2000).

While buddy movies usually have funny moments amongst all the action scenes, in recent years, these movies have begun to rely more on comedy and _____ than action to attract moviegoers. *Hot Fuzz* (2007) and *21 Jump Street* (2013) are two good examples of this new comedic brand of the buddy cop movie.

D Check Your Understanding

Answer the following questions about the article.

1. What is the basic plot of a buddy movie?
2. What is the origin of the buddy cop sub-genre?
3. What does the phrase “fish out of water” mean?
4. What are some variations of the buddy cop genre?
5. How have buddy-cop movies changed recently?

E Iconic Scenes

1. Watch the following scenes from the buddy-cop movie *Lethal Weapon* (1987).

In this scene, we can see the first meeting between Murtaugh and Riggs.

M: Murtaugh, C1: Cop #1, C2: Cop #2, Cap:
Captain

C1: You know Roger, you're way behind the times. The guys in the 80s aren't tough. They're sensitive people. They show their emotions around women and s**t like that... I think I am an 80s man.

M: How you figure?

C1: Last night, I cried in bed, so how's that?

M: Were you with a woman?

C1: I was alone. Why do you think I was crying?
Merry Christmas.

M: Sounds like an 80s man to me.

C2: Got some news on the.... case, Rodge..

M: That was quick.

C2: So was the autopsy. They're not calling it a suicide. Surprise, surprise. First of all, the coroner found evidence she was using barbiturates.

M: Brilliant detective work. There were pills all over the place.

C2: That's not the surprise. The surprise is that someone doctored the pills. Every capsule was

loaded with drain cleaner. If she hadn't jumped, she would have been dead inside of 15 minutes.

M: This case stinks.

Cap: Hey Roger. You looked younger with the beard.

M: Thanks, Captain.

C2: Oh yeah, you shaved the beard.

M: Some detective.

C2: There are two more things.

M: Shoot.

C2: First, the condition of the sheets on the mattress indicate that someone else was in the bed with Amanda just before she died. That's A.

M: What's B?

C2: B is I was supposed to tell you that you are breaking in a new partner on this.

M: Partner again?

C2: Yeah, some cat... he's on loan from dope. A real burn out. On the ragged edge.

M: Oh perfect.Gun! Gun!

C2: Rodge, meet your new partner.

M: Oh, I am too old for this s**t.

2. Ask a partner the following questions.

1. Which characters were the most important in this scene? Why do you think so?
2. What kind of camera shots were used in the filming of this scene?
3. Was the scene funny or not? Why do you think so?
4. How do you think this movie will end?

BUDDY FILMS

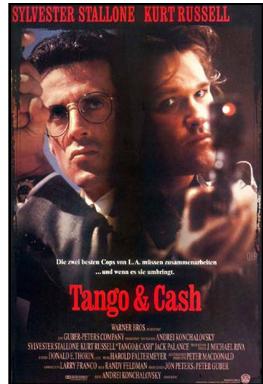
1. Have you seen any of the “must-see” buddy cop films listed below? Which ones?



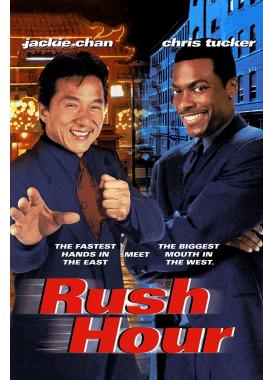
1997
Barry Sonnenfeld



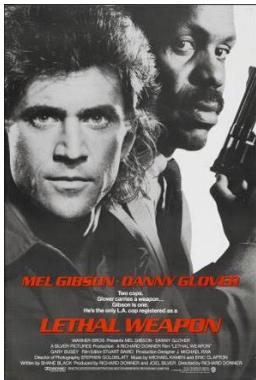
2007
Edgar Wright



1988
A. Konchalovsky, A. Magnoli, P. MacDonald



1998
Brett Ratner



1987
Richard Donner



2013
Paul Feig



1988
Walter Hill



1995
Michael Bay

2. Match the one line synopses with the movie posters above.

- Exceptional London cop is involuntarily transferred to a small English village and paired with a witless new partner. While on the beat, Nicholas suspects a sinister conspiracy is afoot with the residents.
- Two cops team up to get back a kidnapped daughter.
- Two hip detectives protect a murder witness while investigating a case of stolen heroin.
- A police officer joins a secret organization that polices and monitors extraterrestrial interactions on Earth.
- A veteran cop is partnered with a young suicidal cop. Both have one thing in common; hating working in pairs. Now they must learn to work with one another to stop a gang of drug smugglers.
- An uptight FBI Special Agent is paired with a foul-mouthed Boston cop to take down a ruthless drug lord.