From Book to Film 1

About a Boy

A Look at the photo. What do you think is the relationship between the man and the boy? (√)

a  uncle and nephew       b  father and son

a  big brother and little brother       d  good friends

B Read the information in this section and check your answers.

The book

Marcus is twelve. Will is thirty-six. Marcus has a difficult life at home and he’s got problems at school. Will is single, has got money and enjoys life in London. What happens when they meet? A novel about London, love and family life.

C Read the plot.

Plot

Will Freeman has got money and he lives a very comfortable life in London. He doesn’t work and he spends his free time watching television, reading about pop music and going out with girls.

Will wants to meet new girlfriends so he has an idea. He attends a single-parents group near his house and says he has a two-year-old son to convince the women in the group to accept him. He meets Suzie there and he also meets Marcus, the 12-year-old son of Suzie’s friend, Fiona. Marcus has an unhappy family life and Will, he thinks, is the solution to his problems. He starts to follow Will around London and hangs out at Will’s apartment after school.

Will at first doesn’t want Marcus there, but when he gets to know him, he likes him and they become friends. They go for walks and watch TV together. They listen to music and Will takes the boy shopping for new shoes.

At school, Marcus makes friends with a girl named Ellie and he falls in love with her. Will meets Rachel and likes her very much. He tells Rachel that Marcus is his son because he wants her to think he’s a good man. Later, Will realizes that he’s falling in love with Rachel. He wants to be honest with her, so he tells her the truth: Marcus isn’t really his son. Their relationship ends.

The following Christmas, Will has a party at his place where Marcus, Rachel, Fiona and Ellie are all present...

D Read the statements and write T (true) or F (false).

1  Will lives in London.  T

2  Will goes to work every day.  T

3  Will has got a son.  T

4  Marcus is happy at home.  F

5  Will buys Marcus some new jeans.  F

6  Will has a birthday party.  T
The author
Nick Hornby (born 17 April 1957) is an English novelist. He is the author of High Fidelity, About a Boy, and a book about football, Fever Pitch. He writes about music, sports, and relationships between friends and family.

The film
The film of About a Boy (2002) is a romantic comedy directed by Chris Weitz and Paul Weitz. The film stars Golden Globe winner Hugh Grant as Will, Nicholas Hoult as Marcus, Academy Award nominee, Toni Collette, as Fiona, and Academy Award winner, Rachel Weisz, as Rachel.

Work in pairs. Choose a character from exercise E above and act out the scene in pairs.

What are you on about?: Cosa stai dicendo? What is it to you?: Che cosa te ne importa? I've been watching you: Ti ho osservato you've been lying: stai mentendo manage on my own: ce la faccio da solo

**E** Complete the film script with these words. Then listen and watch the film clip.

**F** Work in pairs. Choose a character from exercise E above and act out the scene in pairs.

**G** What do you think are the themes of this film? Find examples from the information here and the film clip, to support your answer. Discuss with the class.