

Intouchables

Intouchables is a 2011 French comedy-drama film directed by Olivier Nakache & Éric Toledano. It stars François Cluzet as the rich but handicapped Philippe, and Omar Sy as his carer, Driss.

The first sequence is a car chase Philippe and Driss are chased and caught by the police, Driss claims that Philippe must be urgently driven to accident and emergency; Philippe pretends to have a stroke and the concerned police officers escort them to the hospital.

The story of the friendship between the two men is then told as a flashback: Philippe, and his assistant Magalie, are interviewing candidates to be his live-in carer. Driss, a candidate, doesn't want to be hired. He is just there to get a signature in order to continue receiving his benefits. He is told to come back the next morning to get his signed letter.

The next day, Driss returns and learns that he is on a trial period for the live-in carer job. Driss does well caring for Philippe, even if his methods are unconventional. Philippe tells a well-meaning friend he does not care about Driss's criminal past because he is the only one that does not treat him with pity.

Driss discovers modern art, opera, and even takes up painting. Philippe even takes him hang-gliding-the reason for his accident. For Philippe's birthday, a private concert of classical music is performed in his living room. As the concert is too staid, Driss plays Earth, Wind & Fire's "Boogie Wonderland", and the birthday party livens up.

Driss eventually convinces Philippe to talk to Eléonore, the woman he has been corresponding with by letter on the phone. A date between Eléonore and Philippe is agreed but does not materialise at that time.

Philippe recognises Driss's need to support his own family and to deal with its problems and releases him from his job.

As Driss is no longer there, Philippe has hired carers to replace him, but he is not happy with any of them and becomes depressed. Yvonne is worried and gets in touch with Driss, who arrives and decides to drive Philippe in his Maserati. This brings the story back to the first scene of the film, the police chase. After they have got away from the police, Driss takes Philippe to the seaside to a restaurant. Driss suddenly leaves the table and wishes Philippe all the best with his lunch date. A few seconds later, Eléonore arrives, and Driss smiles at them through the restaurant window and leaves them.

The film's final sequence states how the men, Philippe Pozzo di Borgo and Abdel Sellou, the real-life people on whom the film is based, remain close friends to this day.

Activity	Skills covered	Ideas for use
Activity 1	The first activity uses an excerpt from the film showing Driss interview, and French subtitles containing deliberate errors. Students use their listening and reading skills to spot the mistake(s).	This activity could be done as a starter and variations could be to correct the error or to translate the subtitles. A solutions sheet is also provided.
Activity 2	Students use their listening, reading and writing skills to spot and correct the mistake in a second extract from the film where Driss “sorts out” a neighbour who blocks the entrance to Philippe’s grand town house.	Students have to listen carefully, spot the mistakes and then correct them. Again the solutions are available for self-assessment.
Activity 3	As with the previous two activities, students have to listen carefully to an extract where Philippe has been called upon by a well-meaning friend to be careful with Driss as he is a convicted criminal and proved to be violent. Students listen and write down what they hear as subtitles for the film (French).	This activity is based on a key section of the film where Philippe explains why he employs Driss, Students can write the subtitles on paper or on-screen, and the computer programme will then allow the students to watch the conversation with the subtitles which the students have written. If done in small groups, then translations can be compared and discussed.
Activity 4	This activity tests students’ listening, reading and translation skills. This is the final sequence of the film where Philippe meets his ‘girl-friend’.	This is very similar to activity one, only the language is different. This time the subtitles are in English with deliberate errors. Students have to identify the errors by clicking on them.

Activity 5	Students use their listening, reading and writing skills to spot and correct the mistake(s) in the English subtitles in the same sequence (Philippe meets his 'girl-friend'.)	This is very similar to activity four, with the difference that now students have to correct the error(s). A printable solutions sheet is also available.
Activity 6	This final activity is a subtitling and translation exercise. It is the sequence where Driss and Philippe have been stopped by the police.	Students can upload their English subtitles and watch their version of the subtitled extract. A downloadable sheet is available to help with the writing of the titles and also there is a sheet with solutions.