

Foreign Language Film Festival 2010-2011

Little Miss Sunshine

About the movie (subtitled version)

DIRECTOR	Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris
YEAR / COUNTRY	2006 / USA
GENRE	Comedy
ACTORS	Greg Kinnear, Toni Collette, Abigail Breslin, Steve Carell, Paul Dano, Alan Arkin



PLOT

The Hoovers are a stressed, dysfunctional family living in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The story begins with Sheryl Hoover, the mother, picking up her suicidal brother from a hospital and bringing him home. Sheryl's husband Richard is a struggling motivational speaker, attempting to market his ideas in book form while annoying his family in the process with his obsessive personality. The couple has a young daughter, Olive, and Sheryl has a morose teenage son, Dwayne, from another relationship. Richard's foul-mouthed father, Edwin, who has just been evicted from a retirement home for using and selling heroin, also lives with them.

During an awkward family dinner, in which most of the family's hang-ups are revealed in one form or another, Olive tells the family of a beauty pageant routine she is working on with her grandfather. Although not exactly typical beauty pageant material, she adores and is excited about pageant work. During dinner, the family hears a recorded phone message from Olive's aunt informing them that Olive has won a place in the Little Miss Sunshine pageant in Redondo Beach, California. Olive is overjoyed, and after some arguing about transportation, the entire family agrees to travel to California in their broken-down Volkswagen microbus. From this point on the film takes the form of a "road movie".

Little Miss Sunshine has won numerous awards and international prizes, including four Academy Award nominations and two Oscars in 2007.

LANGUAGE

Standard American English, some slang and profanity.

GRAMMAR

Relative Clauses

Relative clauses are short phrases beginning with words like *who*, *which*, *that* and *whose* that define or describe people and things. There are two types:

Defining relative clauses define or differentiate the person or thing they refer to. They have the following forms:

◦ *who*, *whom*, *which*, or *that* For people both *who* and *that* are used, but *who* is more common. For things or ideas both *which* and *that* are used, but *that* is more common, especially in speech.

*Sam is the person **who** has the most experience.*
*The products **that** you ordered were sent today.*

◦ No pronoun (if the object of the verb is in the clause)

*The students (**whom**) we saw were studying.*

The salad (**that**) I had for lunch was tasty.

- whose

The United Nations is an organization **whose** policies change quite slowly.

Non-defining relative clauses only give extra information and do not define what they refer to. The relative pronoun must be kept: it cannot be left out. They have the following forms:

- who, which, whom, whose That is never used in a non-defining relative clause.

The salad, **which** had avocado in it, was superb.

The Professor, **whom/who** the students know well, said the computer was working fine.

- We usually use commas to separate a non-defining relative clause from the rest of the sentence.

VOCABULARY

Know-how: knowledge of how to do something	Check on Frank: see if Frank is OK
Sharp objects: objects such as knives, scissors, etc.	Grad student: student pursuing an advanced degree after a B.A.
Bucket of chicken: fried chicken served in a paper or plastic container in the form of a bucket	Far out: good, interesting
Book deal: arrangement to write and publish a book	Genius grant: monetary prize given for scholarship
To hang out with someone: to be with people in your free time, usually friends	Kicking ass: dominating the opposition
You suck!: you're disgusting, bad	Fuck: a word figuratively used to express anger or frustration
To put it off: to postpone something	My Johnson: my penis
Spring Break: a break from school during Easter	Are you getting any?: are you having sex?
Seed money: money set aside or saved for future expenditures or investments	To be cut off (in traffic): when another motorist swerves unexpectedly into your traffic lane, sometimes to gain advantage
Jailbait: a girl or boy under the age of consent with whom unlawful sexual intercourse constitutes rape	Pitching him: trying to convince him
Passed away: dead	We had our shot: we had our opportunity, chance
Done deal: agreed on arrangement	Blow them out of the water: really impress them
To get it: to understand	What are you up to?: what are you doing? What are your intentions?
To roll out: introduce something	Touch up: small change or refinement
Straight shot: direct, one direction	Ragamuffin: a child who is dirty and has torn clothes