

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vasa övningsskola**  
**IB Entrance Exam**  
**English**  
**Example II**

**Read the excerpts from Nick Douglas' article (2017)<sup>i</sup>, and answer the questions.**

### **The Bechdel Test, and Other Media Representation Tests, Explained**

In the latest episode of *Rick & Morty* alternative *The Simpsons*, guest star Alison Bechdel describes her famous Bechdel test for films: Do two female characters have at least one conversation that's not about a man? [...]

Bechdel's test, popularized in her comic *Dykes to Watch Out For*, was never intended to wholly define a film as "feminist" or "sexist." After all, "Baby Got Back" passes it. Bechdel invented the test with her friend Liz Wallace to set a low bar that many Hollywood movies still can't clear. As a character puts it in the comic, "Last movie I was able to see was *Alien*<sup>ii</sup>."

Setting that low bar has many valid uses, which is why it's so popular. For one, as the A.V. Club's Caroline Siede points out, it raises basic awareness of the massive gender disparity in media: Very few movies would fail a reverse Bechdel test for men. [...]

The standard is used in industry revenue analysis (showing that passing films outperform failing ones) and in annual Oscar wrap-ups. It's the basis of a ratings stamp in some Swedish theaters, and it's one of many check-box criteria on screenplay database The Black List. But Bechdel's isn't the only popular test for media's portrayal of women.

### **More Tests of Female Representation**

Tumblr user Chaila invented the Mako Mori test after noting that *Pacific Rim* fails the Bechdel Test despite a strong female character, while *Thor* passes it. A film passes this test if "1) one female character 2) gets her own narrative arc 3) that is not about supporting a man's story." The test is more subjective than Bechdel's, but of course so is the issue they both address. [...]

### **Other Media Tests**

But hey, women are only one of a beautifully wide range of people poorly represented in media! So there are tests for other marginalized groups as well. Some of the best:

The racial Bechdel test has the same simple rules as the Bechdel Test, applied to people of color: At least two of them must have a conversation that's not about a white person. (The native Bechdel test applies a stricter version, to show that movies and shows with Native American characters still often fail.) [...]

GLAAD's Vito Russo test has three requirements: The film must contain a lesbian, gay, bi, or transgender character. That character must not be predominantly defined by their orientation or gender identity—they need to be as unique as straight cis characters. And they must be important enough to affect the plot—they can't just crack some jokes or "paint urban authenticity." [...]



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**Write a blog post (of about 250 words) about a film you have seen. 30p**

**Remember to write about the following:**

- **What was the film?**
- **What was it about? (briefly)**
- **Why did/didn't you like it?**
- **How were different social groups presented in the film?**

**(If you cannot remember any film, you could also write about a TV/Netflix series, a comic book, or a novel.)**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://lifehacker.com/the-bechdel-test-and-other-media-representation-tests-1819324045>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.slashfilm.com/the-bechdel-test/>:

