

WORKBOOK

FORREST GUMP

1994 | Robert Zemeckis | Drama / Comedy

Level: B1–B2 Intermediate



SECTION 1: PRE-WATCHING

About the Film

Forrest Gump (1994) is one of the most beloved American films of all time. It tells the story of a man from Alabama with a low IQ who accidentally becomes part of major historical events. The film features themes of love, friendship, war, and perseverance.

1.1 Predict the Story

Look at these words taken from the film. What do you think the story is about? Write 3–4 sentences.

football | Vietnam War | shrimp boat | running | feather | destiny

1.2 Key Vocabulary — Match Before You Watch

Match the words on the left with their definitions on the right.

Word	Definition
1. destiny (n.)	d) not having much experience of bad things; pure
2. perseverance (n.)	e) to give up something important for a reason
3. coincidence (n.)	b) continuing to do something despite difficulty
4. innocent (adj.)	a) a force that is believed to control what happens
5. sacrifice (v.)	c) a remarkable occurrence of events at the same time

SECTION 2: VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

2.1 Key Words from the Film

Study these words and phrases from Forrester Gump. Pay attention to how they are used in context.

Word / Phrase	Part of Speech	Definition / Translation
stupid is as stupid does	<i>idiom</i>	People's actions show their true character, not their appearance
to run like the wind	<i>idiom / phrasal</i>	To run very fast, with great speed
to mean the world to (sb)	<i>phrasal verb</i>	To be extremely important to someone
to get shot of sth	<i>phrasal verb</i>	To get rid of something / someone (informal)
lieutenant (n.)	<i>noun</i>	A military rank; officer below captain
shrimp (n.)	<i>noun</i>	A small sea creature eaten as food
to take care of (sb)	<i>phrasal verb</i>	To look after someone; to be responsible for them
destiny (n.)	<i>noun</i>	The events that will happen to someone in the future
to run for office	<i>idiom</i>	To compete in an election (political)
feather (n.)	<i>noun</i>	A light flat growth from a bird's body; symbol of chance in the film

2.2 Fill in the Gaps

Use the words from the table above to complete the sentences. Change the form if necessary.

- Forrest always believed that everything happened for a reason — it was his _____.
- Jenny always _____ Forrest, even when he was far away.
- The white _____ floating in the wind opens and closes the film as a symbol of life.
- His mama _____ to him. She was the most important person in his life.
- Forrest did not plan anything — opportunities just came to him. Was it luck or _____?

2.3 Idioms and Phrasal Verbs — In Your Own Words

Choose TWO expressions from the vocabulary table and write your own example sentences:

Expression 1:

My sentence:

Expression 2:

My sentence:

SECTION 3: LISTENING & COMPREHENSION

3.1 Quote of the Film — Dictation

Listen to the opening scene and fill in the missing words:

"Mama always said life was like a _____ of _____. You never know what you're gonna _____."

Now answer: What does this quote mean in your opinion? Use phrases like: In my view... / This metaphor suggests that...

3.2 True or False?

Based on the film, mark each statement TRUE or FALSE:

#	Statement	TRUE	FALSE
1	Forrest grows up in Alabama with his mother.	☐	☐
2	Forrest has an extremely high IQ from birth.	☐	☐
3	Jenny and Forrest become friends as children.	☐	☐
4	Forrest receives the Medal of Honor for his military service.	☐	☐
5	Forrest starts a successful shrimping business with Bubba.	☐	☐

3.3 Scene Comprehension

Watch the shrimping scenes and answer the questions:

6. Why does Forrest start a shrimping business?

7. What was the name of the boat? Why did Forrest choose that name?

8. What unexpected event helps their shrimping business become successful?

SECTION 4: GRAMMAR THROUGH FILM

Grammar Focus: Past Tenses

Forrest Gump is narrated almost entirely in the past tense, making it a perfect film for studying:

- Past Simple — completed actions: "I ran." / "She said."
- Past Continuous — background actions: "She was sitting on the porch."
- Past Perfect — earlier past: "I had run for three years."
- Used to — habits in the past: "Mama used to say..."

4.1 Identify the Tense

Look at these quotes from the film. Identify which past tense is used and why:

Quote from the film	Tense / Structure used
<i>My mama always said, life was like a box of chocolates.</i>	Past Continuous — action in progress
<i>I had run for three years, two months, fourteen days.</i>	Imperative form
<i>Run, Forrest, run!</i>	Past Simple — reported speech
<i>I was running.</i>	Past Perfect — sequence of events

4.2 Rewrite the Sentences

Change these sentences from Present Simple to Past Simple. Keep the meaning the same.

9. Forrest runs across the country for three years.

→ _____

10. Jenny sings at a cafe and plays the guitar.

→ _____

11. Lieutenant Dan does not believe in miracles.

→ _____

4.3 Used to vs. Would

Complete these sentences using USED TO or WOULD + verb:

12. Forrest _____ (wear) leg braces when he was a child.

13. His mama _____ (tell) him wise things about life.

14. Bubba _____ (talk) about shrimp all the time.

15. Jenny and Forrest _____ (run) through the fields together.

SECTION 5: SPEAKING & DISCUSSION

5.1 Roleplay – The Bench Scene

Instructions for Roleplay

Work with a partner. One person plays FORREST, the other plays a STRANGER at the bus stop. Forrest starts telling his life story. The stranger asks questions and reacts.

Use these conversation starters:

- "Have you been waiting long?"
- "You won't believe what happened to me once..."
- "That reminds me of something my mama always said..."
- "What did you do after that?"

5.2 Discussion Questions

Discuss these questions with a partner or write your answers:

16. Forrest never plans his life — things just happen to him. Do you believe in destiny? Why / Why not?

17. Who had a bigger influence on Forrest — his mother or Jenny? Give examples from the film.

18. The film is set across several decades of US history. What historical events does Forrest witness? How does this affect the story?

19. "Stupid is as stupid does." Do you agree with this idea? Can you think of a real-life example?

5.3 Compare – Then and Now

Forrest grows up in the American South in the 1950s–60s. How different is that world from today? Fill in the table:

Theme	In the Film (1950s–70s)	Today
Racial segregation		
War and military service		
Opportunities for disabled people		
Technology and communication		

SECTION 6: WRITING TASKS

6.1 Film Review (150–200 words)

Write a short review of Forrest Gump. Use the structure below:

Review Structure

Paragraph 1: Introduction – name of film, director, year, genre

Paragraph 2: Brief plot summary (no spoilers!)

Paragraph 3: Your opinion – what you liked / did not like

Paragraph 4: Recommendation – who would enjoy this film?

6.2 Alternative Ending

What if Forrest had NOT started running across America? Write a short paragraph (80–100 words) describing what might have happened instead. Use past tenses.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

6.3 Letter from Forrest to Jenny

Imagine you are Forrest. Write a short letter (100–120 words) to Jenny from Vietnam. Tell her what is happening, how you feel, and what you hope for the future.

Dear Jenny,

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Yours truly,
Forrest

SECTION 7: CULTURAL NOTES

7.1 Historical Events in the Film

Forrest Gump travels through decades of American history. Match the event with the decade:

Historical Event	Decade	Your answer
School desegregation in Alabama	1950s	_____
Vietnam War	1960s–70s	_____
Anti-war protests and hippie movement	1960s–70s	_____
Watergate scandal	1970s	_____
Cross-country running craze	1980s	_____

7.2 American South — Language Notes

Forrest speaks with a Southern American accent and uses informal grammar. These are common features:

In the Film	Standard English	Feature
<i>You're gonna get</i>	<i>You are going to get</i>	gonna = informal 'going to'
<i>I was just running</i>	<i>I was simply running</i>	just = Southern filler word
<i>Yes, ma'am</i>	<i>Yes, madam / Yes, Mrs.</i>	Polite form of address
<i>That's all I have to say about that</i>	<i>That is all I want to say</i>	Southern understatement

SECTION 8: MY MOVIE JOURNAL

8.1 New Words I Learned

Write 5 new words or phrases you learned from watching Forrest Gump:

Word / Phrase	Meaning	My example sentence

8.2 My Reaction

Answer these personal questions after watching:

What was your favourite scene and why?

Which character did you find most interesting?

Would you recommend this film to a friend? How would you describe it in 3 words?

8.3 My Rating

Circle your rating: 1 2 3 4 5 ★

My one-sentence summary of this film:
