

TV SITCOMS

You must hand in:

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES	<u>TASKS</u>
A01: Knowledge & understanding	<u>TASK 1</u> Analysis of TV schedules: review TV schedules and answer the questions.
A02: Interpretation and analysis	<u>TASK 2</u> 1. <i>Narrative Structure</i> : Using Todorov's narrative theory analyse two sitcoms 2. <i>Conventions</i> : answer the questions about sitcom conventions 3. <i>Typical Characters & Situations</i> : create two maps that examine the typical characters and situations in TV sitcoms
A03: Production skills	<u>TASK 3</u> 1. <u>The Treatment</u> : a) Create your own British sitcom set in London. b) Brainstorm your ideas (<u>characters</u> , <u>themes</u> , <u>situation</u> and <u>location</u>). c) Write your treatment. 2. <u>The Script</u> : a) With your idea for a British sitcom you can begin to imagine the script. b) Create a script for one of the key scenes in your British sitcom. It may be from the beginning, middle or end of the episode.

Task 1 – Research

1. Analysis of TV schedules: review TV schedules and answer the questions.

Task 2- Analysis & Interpretation

1. Narrative Structure: Using Todorov's narrative theory analyse two sitcoms
2. Conventions: answer the questions about sitcom conventions
3. Typical Characters & Situations: create two maps that examine the typical characters and situations in TV sitcoms

TASK 3- PRODUCTION

3. The Treatment:
d) Create your own British sitcom set in London.
e) Brainstorm your ideas (characters, themes, situation and location).
f) Write your treatment.

REMEMBER: You to give your sitcom a name and the episode a title.

4. The Script:
c) With your idea for a British sitcom you can begin to imagine the script.
d) Create a script for **one** of the **key scenes** in your British sitcom. It may be from the beginning, middle or end of the episode.

All work must be completed on paper.

DUE DATE:

Ms Dooley

There are THREE Sections to this coursework. You must complete each section.

Aims:

1. To revise paper one: **Television Situation Comedy (TV sitcom)**
2. To identify the main conventions (characteristics) of TV Sitcoms
3. To analyse the narrative structure of a TV sitcom
4. To recognise the BBC as an institution
5. To show a knowledge and understanding of common stereotypes and representations used in TV Sitcoms

Production Skills You Will Learn:

- To produce a treatment/plan for a new TV Sitcom set in London which both uses and adapts common stereotypes
- To write a script for a key part of your sitcom

British Sitcoms

Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps
My Family
The Vicar of Dibley
The Green Green Grass
Only Fools and Horses
One Foot in the Grave
The Office
Father Ted
Desmonds

US Sitcoms

Malcolm in the Middle
Every Body Hates Chris
My Name is Earl
Fresh Prince of Bel Air
Scrubs
Ugly Betty
Friends
Futurama
The Simpsons
That's so Raven

Use the following resources to help you:

1) TV Listings

Radio Times (available online or in print)

www.radiotimes.com

TV Guides from weekend editions of national newspapers

2) Background information:

BBC Sitcoms

www.bbc.co.uk/sitcom/

British Sitcom News

www.sitcom.co.uk

Background on particular sitcoms

www.wikipedia.org

3) Plot and Character backgrounds:

Official sites, e.g. www.thesimpsons.com

4) Clips:

www.bbc.co.uk/comedy/clips/

www.youtube.com

Task1 – Research

- Look at the TV listings for the week ahead. Draw up a table to show the schedule of all the Sitcoms on TV that week. You should include the title of the show, channel, time, summary of the plot and any other information you feel is useful e.g. viewing figures.

Title	Time	Channel	Summary of Plot	Other information

- Answer the following questions

1. At what times are most sitcoms shown? Can you give reasons for this?

2. Which channel shows the most sitcoms? Can you think why?

3. Were any of the sitcoms a repeat? When were they repeated? Why?

4. Can you explain the popularity of sitcoms?

5. How important are Sitcoms to television? Give reasons for your answer

Task 2- Analysis & Interpretation

Narrative Structure

Narrative structure is the way a story is organised. As every story must have a beginning middle and end; we tend to look at narrative structure in terms of the events in the story at these times.

Tzvetan Todorov (a media writer) said that every story has FIVE narrative stages.

- 1. Equilibrium-** the setting is introduced
- 2. Disruption-** something happens to disturb the peace, like an opposing character enters the story
- 3. Recognition of disruption-** the characters realise that something has happen to disturb things
- 4. Attempt to repair disruption**
- 5. Return of equilibrium-** the situation is solved or repaired

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Task 2- Analysis & Interpretation

Narrative Structure

- **Watch an episode two sitcoms from your list in task 1.**
- **Make sure at least one of them is British. Fill in the table below to demonstrate what happens at different stages in the story.**

	3 Sitcoms (including the example)		
Narrative Stage	Example: Rosanne 'Brain-Dead Poets Society'		
Equilibrium	All family are in the kitchen, Dan is talking about the basket ball game on Friday. Darlene the middle child, a tomboy, is excited about it too.		
Disruption	Rosanne tells her daughter that she will not be watching the game until she finishes all her homework following a poor report.		
Recognition of disruption	Darlene struggles to write her poem		
Attempt to repair disruption	Rosanne gets old poetry book to help her but she laughs finding them 'nerdy'. The next day Rosanne finds that Darlene has won the poetry competition and must perform it at 'Culture Night' but does not want to loose street cred by going as it is on the same night as the game. She forces Darlene to go.		
Return of equilibrium	Darlene goes and sports a pink dress for the event, she is angry at being forced to go. After one of her 'nerdy' classmates reads his depressing rendition she performs her very poignant poem. Rosanne is left in amazed at the tomboy's sensitive side.		

1) Conventions

What are the main themes and issues of the sitcoms you have watched? How do you think these relate to the target audience of these shows?

For Example: the theme of marriage appeals to audiences as it is a custom that a lot of people can relate to

Where are the main scenes set? Are there lots of different locations or a few? Give examples and justify why you think they are used

2) Typical Characters & Situations

Using the situations and character types below, as well as any additions you may have brainstorm two BBC sitcoms and one on another channel. Use the blank page provided

Characters

Quirky odd neighbour/ relative

Smart younger sibling

Womaniser

Grumpy old man

Moody teenager

Sarcastic & cynical person

Super efficient mother

Irrational female

Fashion obsessed female

Over optimistic neighbour or friend

Lazy underachiever

Pompous snob

The naïve/ clumsy fool

Lovable Cheeky Chappy

The ethnic stereotype

The man eater

Situations

Fish out of water

Family life

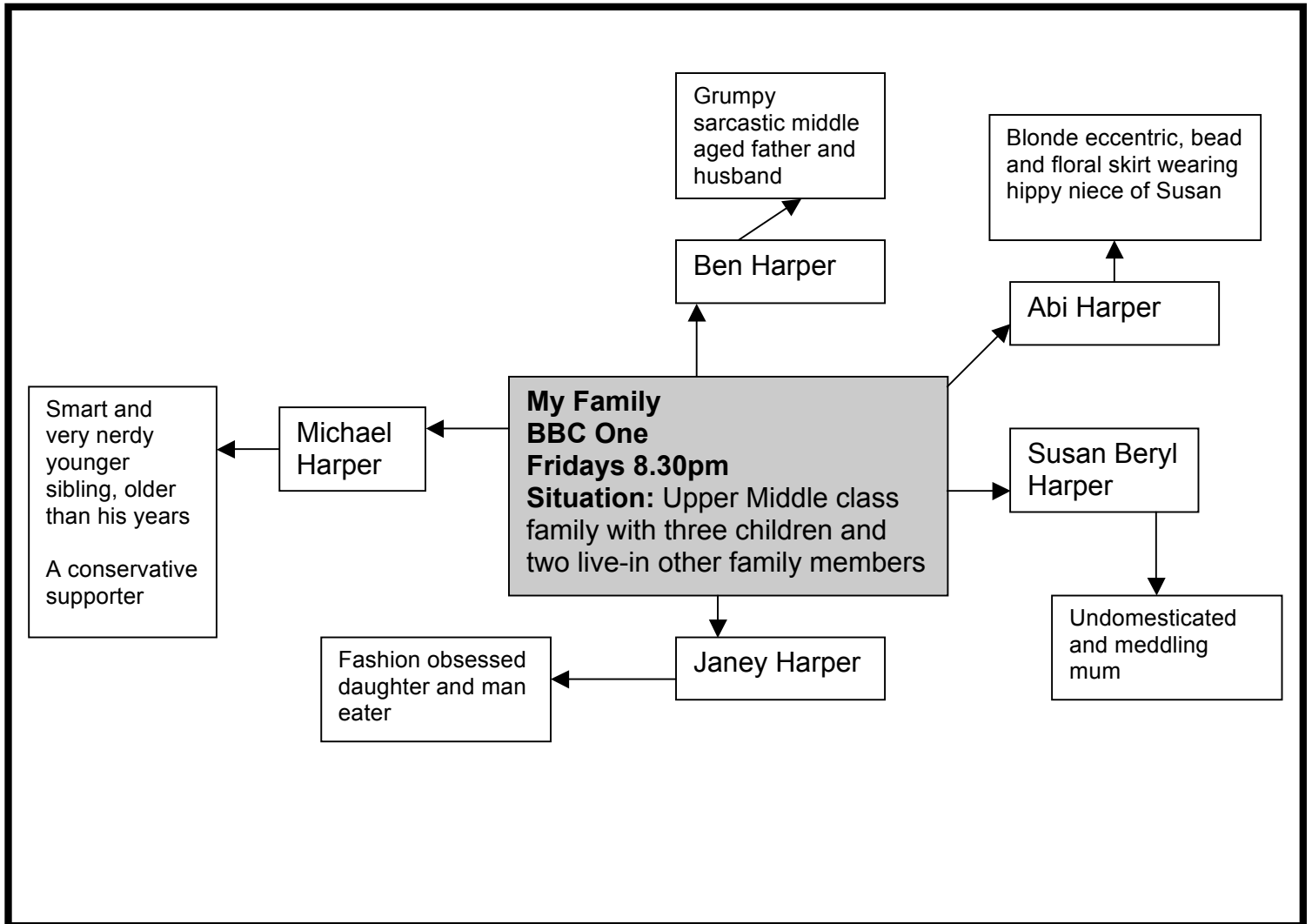
The work place

Small villages

High School

3) Typical Characters & Situations

For example:



3) Typical Characters & Situations

TASK 3- PRODUCTION

1) The Treatment

A **Treatment** is a short written description of what will happen in each scene of a moving image text. Every paragraph stands for a scene and every main character has their name written in capital letters. It also specifies the location and time of each scene. **Sitcom treatments are usually no more than 1/2 of a page.** You are being marked on your understanding of sitcoms and your creativity.

Example of an opening sequence:

Model Daze

The Shoot

INT. JESSIE'S KITCHEN, MORNING DAY

JESSIE is sitting at the breakfast table applying lipstick carefully in front of a mirror. DARREN comes in quietly and turns the radio up startling her. Her hand slips and her cheek is covered in a red streak. He does not notice how angry she is and slaps her on the back. She is irritated as he sings around the kitchen.

EXT. JESSIE'S FRONT GARDEN, MORNING DAY

DARREN gets into his car. HE is pushed right up to the screen and is attempting to adjust the seat when it suddenly jerks forward; he bangs his head against the steering wheel. JESSIE walks past whistling, she apologises for not moving the seat back.

- 1. Based on what you have learnt you must come up with your own British sitcom set in London.**
- 2. Use the space below to brainstorm your ideas (characters, themes, situation and location).**
- 3. Write the treatment on the reverse. You must give your sitcom a name and the episode a title.**

2) The Script

Now that you have an idea for a British sitcom you can begin to imagine the script. In the space provided draft a script for one of the key scenes in your British sitcom. It may be from the beginning, middle or end of the episode. Use the format below to help you lay it out properly.

For Example (short extract from the beginning of a sitcom):

Model Daze

The Shoot

Jessie is applying thick red lipstick on at the kitchen table. The quiet hum of the radio is heard in the background. Darren enters, he turns the radio up. Hard Fi's 'Living for the Weekend' blurts out of the speakers.

Jessie:

(Startled)

AAARRGH!

(She has drawn a red lipstick mark across her face)

Darren:

Mornin' beautiful! Are you going on a photo shoot or to the circus?

Jessie:

Ho ho! Reading your old man's joke book again Daz!

