

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Media Studies

Unit 1: Investigating the Media

A* Grade Exemplar Script June 2010 – Reality Television

version 1.1



Broadcast Reality TV
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Broadcast Reality TV
Real Life–Real Issues–Real Drama

Want to get involved in television production? Then read on.

As an independent producer of Reality Television, we are always looking to commission new programmes.

Currently, we are working on ideas for a programme that is targeted at prime time audiences. However, we are aware of the criticisms that are levelled at Reality Television. It has developed a reputation for voyeurism and for exploiting and humiliating people.

We don't want to make a 'freak show' and we must avoid the negative stereotypes often seen on television. We don't want to lose the entertainment value of Reality Television but we do want a programme which is informative, educational and encourages positive role models. Remember an important element of Reality Television is the opportunity for interactive participation by the audience.

All we have got so far is the programme title **Second Chances**. It is up to you to decide on a format.

It is important that our programme is suitable for prime time family viewing. So we need to be careful about the content of the programme.

We are planning to pilot a six week run in the summer. Your remit is to come up with a pitch that meets our challenge.

An important aspect in considering your idea will be how we are going to market it to the target audience. Don't forget that a successful Reality Television programme relies heavily on its ability to be effectively promoted across the media.

You have six weeks in which to prepare and then you will be asked to complete four tasks.
Remember to:

- keep your responses short and focused
- use diagrams/illustrations where appropriate
- provide examples where you can to support your ideas.

The successful pitch will be used for the production of this pilot.

Good luck with this. We look forward to hearing from you.



Ray Lite: Commissioning Editor
rlite@broadcastrealitytv.co.uk

Turn over ►

Glossary

Commission	To give authority to a person or group to carry out a task on behalf of a company, often for payment.
Format	The way in which a programme is put together or constructed.
Interactive participation	The ability of a home audience to take part in a television programme in order to influence an outcome, eg through digital or telephone voting.
Negative stereotype	A critical representation of a group of people. Stereotyping is a labelling process which leads to generalisations which are often unfair and can influence what we believe.
Pilot	A prototype programme in a series being considered for transmission. The success or otherwise of this trial programme often influences this decision.
Pitch	To present a summary of an idea in order to win a commission.
Prime time	Peak viewing time when television attracts its largest audience.
Remit	A task or challenge officially given to someone to undertake.
Role model	The behaviour expected of, or associated with, an individual or group in society which can influence others.
Voyeurism	The pleasure we receive from watching others on television in private or unrehearsed settings from the distance of our own homes.

Complete **all** tasks.

You should spend **45 minutes on Tasks 1(A) and 1(B) and 45 minutes on Tasks 2(A) and 2(B).**

Task 1 (A)

0 1 Audience research into Reality Television suggests:

- it is popular because it engages with the lives of 'real' people
- audiences enjoy the idea of celebrity
- it provides the opportunity to participate interactively.

How far do you agree that these are the reasons that Reality Television is so popular?
Give examples to support your views. (15 marks)

Task 1 (B)

0 2 Bearing in mind the type of programme we are looking for, let's have your pitch for the pilot series of '**Second Chances**'. You need to think about:

- format
- location/set
- presenter
- characters
- scheduling.

(15 marks)

Task 2 (A)

0 3 One of the characteristics of Reality Television is the way in which it is promoted across the media: for example breakfast television, chat shows, the popular press, radio, websites and blogs. What are the advantages of this? Provide some examples to support your views. (15 marks)

Task 2 (B)

EITHER

0 4 A strategy for promoting the series '**Second Chances**' would be through a website. Create the homepage for this website. You should use the A3 design sheet enclosed. (15 marks)

OR

0 5 A strategy for promoting the series '**Second Chances**' would be through a 30 second trailer to be aired on prime time television. Create a ten frame storyboard for this trailer. You should use the ten frame storyboard sheet enclosed. (15 marks)

END OF TASKS

0 1

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Dear Ray,
 You may agree with this through the use of celebrities and 'real' people being popular because of programmes such as xfactor. They use ordinary people who have a dream to do with a very hard industry. They use celebrities in the final as a comparison to the contestants. This allows the audience to realise how far the participants have come throughout the show. The audience are also given the opportunity to interact through voting in programmes similar such as Britain's Got Talent. This may be seen as what makes it popular, however it is also a very easy way of making money for the institution ITV. The use of celebrities also make it popular because it can be easy to see them humiliated in programmes such as Strictly Come Dancing. It gives the audience a sense of reassurance that these 'perfect' celebrities aren't all that they see.

On the other hand you could disagree and say that the reasoning of why reality TV is so popular is the idea of humiliation, exploitation and the growing narrative. For example in Big Brother, Channel 4 use conflict as a way of influencing how we see the characters and therefore provide high entertainment for us. Furthermore a reason for the popularity and interaction may be the amount of media coverage reality TV gets through magazines, tabloids and other television programmes. The audience are constantly being reminded of these programmes, for example the controversial ideas surrounding the racial abuse in Celebrity Big Brother.*

In conclusion, I think that the popularity of reality television is due to the level of entertainment. The use of 'real' people, celebrities and interaction are just aspects which encourage entertainment. The producers can make it easily with little funding and because there is always an element for everyone the audience enjoy. For example Over The Rainbow allows the BBC to interest all audiences. I will need to remember for my show that there needs to be a wide audience. * and the effect this had on Ofcom due to the numerous complaints which they received.

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15

Excellent u/s / shows flow 2

10+5



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Considering the elements in your brief Ray, I have thought out an original, educational, entertaining reality TV programme. I have avoided the exploitation of participants, the encouragement of a 'freak show' and the use of negative stereotypes. The concept of my programme will be based around a failing school who are guided in a more successful direction - they are given a 'second chance'. Over the six weeks a one hour show will be shown each week on BBC from 7-8 before Waterloo Road. The content agrees with the BBC mission statement 'inform, educate, entertain', the time with the prime audience and it also has the similar audience to Waterloo Road.

format: each week will show a progression within the school, showing both the ups and downs. However the programme will be edited so that it doesn't exploit the participants, unlike programmes such as Nanny 911 and wife Swap which humiliate the families by showing the negative aspects. In Second Chances the bad times will be used to learn from by both the audience and the participants unlike how it is used for pure entertainment in xfactor.

presenter: Ray, I have chosen the actress who plays Steph Paddock in Waterloo Road. She is known by the younger audience for her role and is also known by the mothers for her involvement in Loose Women. She'll have an understanding with the participants as well as being funny and entertaining for the engagement of the audience. She will also be used as the narrator.

participants: 6 students, 5 teachers and the headteacher will be involved to show all view points of the situations throughout. The programme will teach them how to work together and therefore have respect for each other. The audience will also have this influenced on them. These characters will not support negative stereotypes or 'freak

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Excellent u/s / shows flow 2

10+5

shows because they will be ordinary people who all ages and both genders will be able to relate to.

I think that the most important aspect of Second Chances is to influence change in the industry and divert to negative perception which many people have on it. There will always be elements of the uses and gratifications theory to include such as entertainment and social interaction, however this does not suggest it can not be educational and encourage positive stereotypes. I hope that Second Chances will be an encouragement of improving the standards of education as well influencing how reality TV is interpreted. The participants will grow as people in the way they respect each other and their interaction.


V+1

T

sound & music: this will be used to add to the atmosphere without encouraging the audience's view on the participants who are involved at this point. It will not be used as a sob story like it is in talent reality TV shows.

camera footage: this will mainly use fly on the wall and interview so that the audience can interpret the real situation rather than a 'real' idea in programmes such as Super Nanny and Hell's Kitchen.

Overall Ray, I hope that you consider my understanding of the current reality TV and how I believe that Second Chance could educate the audience just as easily as it entertains them. The school involved will hopefully improve dramatically or even just learn how they can become more successful, even without it being evident yet.

The Logo:  → a black board with the title written and an apple which relates to the concept.

S+S+S (15)

Excellent pitch / workable 4 ← creative



3 The first advantage of using promotion across the media is the appeal to the audience. When the participants in programmes such as The Apprentice and I'm a Celebrity are constantly being shown in magazines it will attract new viewers. Institutions are able to gain higher publicity and therefore higher ratings. Furthermore the use of all media will be mean companies are more likely to want to advertise during reality TV and institutions such as ITV and channel 4 earn more funding. Overall, using promotion across different medias allows the institution to take the programme to a higher level of entertainment and it becomes a circle of how it works.

eg Inst

Another advantage of using other medias would be the awareness of opportunities which normal people can achieve through reality TV. For example on breakfast television and the radio offer the audience to interact and express their views. Even the audience achieve their thirty seconds of fame which is all the participants on reality TV really care about. It again encourages the popularity of ~~from~~ reality TV because there is always a reminder. For example spin off shows such as Strictly Come Dancing: It takes two provides more information and more viewers are intrigued to the show.

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Promotion across the media is always involved when something in reality TV goes wrong, yet it always becomes a benefit for the producers. Participants in both Wife Swap and My Super Sixteen (both with extremely different audiences) have complained about how they have been interpreted through the editing. The promotion just encouraged more people to watch it because they thought it would be entertaining and they were correct. The only advantage of promotion across the media is that there is a growing audience, growing ratings and therefore a growing funding for the institutions which rely on advertising. This would be considered in my promotion

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Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

Answer

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to make sure that it ~~does~~ not create a negative image for the programme or institution. We would not need this funding because of BBC being paid by a TV license. We have a more important duty to our viewers to provide education, information and entertainment. ✓

Excellent tv + v / shows flair

10+5

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Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

Answer

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STORYBOARD SHEET

	<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ① establishing shot of the school involved. Bad weather to add to the atmosphere → count down in the corner showing a limit of time.</p>	<p>Dialogue/Sound style of advert is based on the programme advert for '24'. narrator: 'one school is given a chance'. ↳ nondiegetic sound</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ② mid shot of two of the participants arguing over the situation.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ③ long shot of one of the participants alone crying.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ④ close up of three participants talking and agreeing over something.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ⑤ extreme long shot of all twelve participants holding hands in a circle → showing togetherness and teamwork.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - fade</p>		

	<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ⑥ mid shot of the presenter handing over the piece of paper with details of the programme.</p>	<p>Dialogue/Sound presenter: 'make the most of it.'</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ⑦ screen splits to half mid shot and half title screen showing a rhetorical question ↳ makes audience think.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - fade</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ⑧ title screen ↳ black background with red, bold font. ↳ aims to all audiences.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - fade</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ⑨ title screen ↳ same colours and font throughout.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		<p>Shot No./Type of Shot/ Camera Movement ⑩ title screen including the name of the show, the logo & the institution logo. Shows starting date.</p>
<p>Edit/Length of Shot 3 seconds - cut</p>		

Excellent use of codes / creative 5+10 (15)

Script Commentary

Task 1

This is an **excellent** response, demonstrating confident knowledge and understanding of a range of Reality Television. The candidate not only addresses all three bullet points raised by the question, but moves beyond them to provide a genuine debate about the success of Reality Television. This is an important feature of the work which helps to place it at the very top of a Level 6. The argument presented is well organised and uses a range of media terminology throughout.

Marks awarded: 15

Task 2

This is an **excellent** pitch which works very closely with the demands set out in the brief. This is a very important performance indicator in assessing the quality of the response for this task and helps to place it at the top of Level 6. Candidates were set the challenge of creating an idea for a programme which could be both educational and entertaining. The candidate focuses very successfully on this twin set of demands throughout the pitch and in doing so demonstrates total confidence in working with the codes and conventions of Reality Television. Once again the response is well organised, demonstrating independence of thought and total confidence in the use of media terminology.

Marks awarded: 15

Task 3

This task not only asks candidates to demonstrate **knowledge** of cross media promotion, but to achieve high marks this needs to be accompanied by a secure understanding of the **advantages** it presents and supported by **examples**. Once again this is an **excellent** response. The candidate makes very interesting links between promotion, gaining new audiences and securing higher revenues and in doing so shows a sophisticated understanding of institutional issues which places it at the very top of Level 6.

Marks awarded: 15

Task 4

This is a creative storyboard which is totally fit for purpose. The candidate works very closely with the pitch presented in Task 2 and uses the 10 frames very well to demonstrate an **excellent** understanding of the codes and conventions of trailers. The voice over is extremely successful in promoting the programme and is closely integrated with the visuals presented. The candidate uses a range of camera shots to create a narrative which is well organised and successful in engaging the target audience.

Marks awarded: 15