



GCSE Eduqas Topic Tests

Component 2A: Sitcoms: *Modern Family*

Second Edition, May 2023

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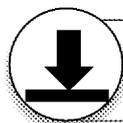
Teacher's Introduction

This resource is for use with GCSE Eduqas (C680QS) Media Studies Component 2A Sitcoms and relates specifically to the set products for **first assessment from 2024**:

- *Modern Family* Series 8, Episode 2
- *Friends* Series 1, Episode 1

Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.



Pages from this resource which are relevant to the set products for final assessment in **2023** are available on the ZigZag Education support files system, which can be accessed via zzed.uk/productsupport

The tests can be used for monitoring the progress of students throughout the course and will help to provide regular informed feedback on progress and learning for the teacher and students, and for reporting to parents/carers.

The tests can be used as end-of-topic texts, revision quizzes, exam preparation or homework.

The tests are engaging and help consolidate learning, giving students the opportunity to practise applying their knowledge. A range of question styles has been used to expose students to different question types and to give variety in the activities, including practice questions in an exam-style format.

Each topic test uses a range of question styles:

- Each topic test starts with factual multiple-choice, tick-box and **short-answer questions**, testing **factual knowledge** and **key vocabulary**. This ensures that core fundamental ideas for each topic are understood by the student. These questions allow weaker students and students who don't enjoy extended writing tasks to test and show their knowledge.
- Questions then increase in difficulty including **medium-length knowledge, explanation and analysis** questions. These are not in exam style, and the purpose of these is to test different elements, knowledge and skills from the specification in a variety of styles.
- At the end of each topic test there are **exam-style questions**, requiring longer answers. This helps to prepare students for what they might meet in the exam, and to test exam skills.

Mark allocations and answers are provided, which are useful for peer- and self-assessment as well as providing you, as the teacher, an opportunity to assess students' strengths and weaknesses in order to inform the teaching and learning process.

Specification overview table

This table can be used to identify which areas you are teaching and select the appropriate topic test to suit your needs.

Tests are all worth 45 marks in total and should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. However, some tests may take slightly longer, depending on the content covered by the test.

Topic test	Topic test title	Set Products		Total marks
1	Sitcoms – Genre	<i>Modern Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	45
2	Sitcoms – Media Language	<i>Modern Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	45
3	Sitcoms – Representation	<i>Modern Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	45
4	Sitcoms – Industries	<i>Modern Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	45
5	Sitcoms – Audiences	<i>Modern Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	45
6	Sitcoms – Contexts	<i>Modern Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>	45

May 2023

Second Edition, May 2023

This resource has been updated in line with specification changes to set products for exams from 2024.

Student Progress Grid

Students should complete the relevant sections of this grid before and after every progress and identify any areas for further study.

Test number	Topic	Film/Programmes	Before completing the test			After completing the test			Score out of 45
			Not very confident	Average confident	Very confident	Not very confident	Average confident	Very confident	
1	Sitcoms – Genre	<i>Modern Family</i> <i>Friends</i>							
2	Sitcoms – Media Language	<i>Modern Family</i> <i>Friends</i>							
3	Sitcoms – Representation	<i>Modern Family</i> <i>Friends</i>							
4	Sitcoms – Industries	<i>Modern Family</i> <i>Friends</i>							
5	Sitcoms – Audiences	<i>Modern Family</i> <i>Friends</i>							
6	Sitcoms – Contexts	<i>Modern Family</i> <i>Friends</i>							

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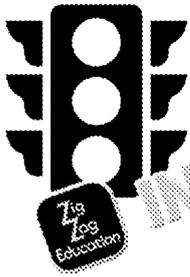


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Topic Test 4: Sitcoms – Industries

Q1. Choose the most accurate definition of the media term 'green light'.



- a) Cars can drive forwards
- b) A sitcom is going to make a profit
- c) An idea for a programme will go into production
- d) The production company enjoyed the process

Q2. Fill in the details about the sitcoms.

- a) Which network was *Friends* first broadcast on in America?
- b) Which channel was *Friends* first broadcast on in the UK?
- c) Name one of the producers/writers of *Friends*
- d) Which channel was *Modern Family* first broadcast on in America?
- e) Name the parent company for *Modern Family*

Q3. Fill in the gaps in this paragraph with the words in the box. Use the words only once.

PG watershed CO1 BBFC Federal Communications

In the USA, television programmes are regulated by the a) _____
age ratings of b) _____. In the UK, *Friends* was given an age rating of c) _____.
In the UK, television programmes are monitored by d) _____.
e) _____. *Modern Family* was shown before the start of the show in the
UK, *Modern Family* has an age rating of g) _____ meaning the production company is
responsible for their children engaging with the show.

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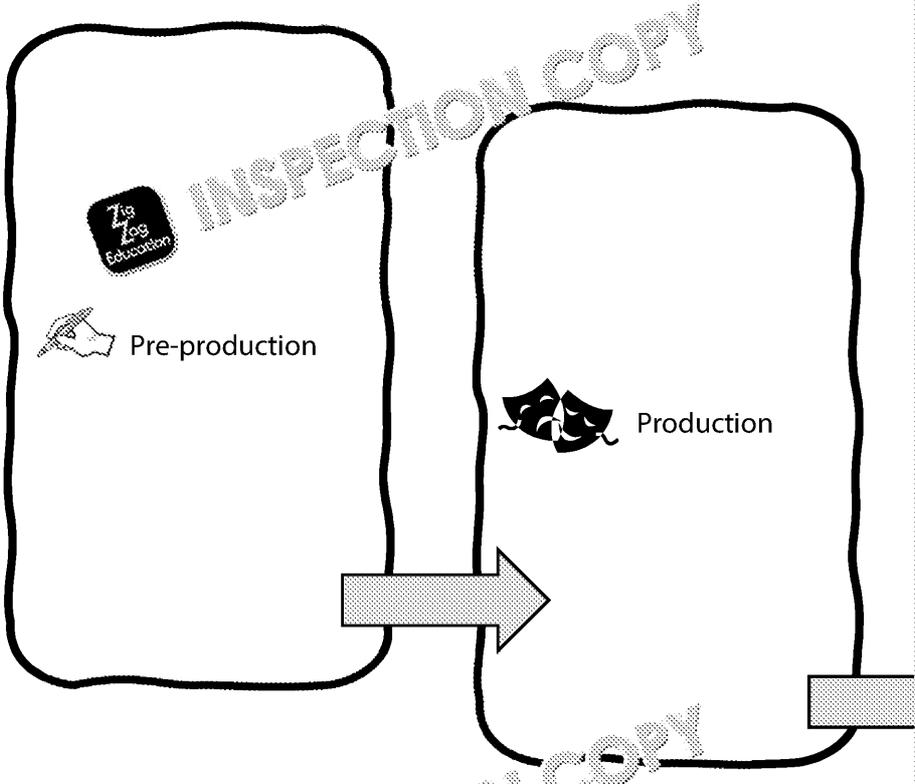


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Q4. Add the terms in the box to the correct stage of the production process.

Network commissions a pilot	Editing	Film on set	Prepare a pitch
Hire a show runner			Network checks the programme
Network picks up the programme			Hire a production team



Q5. Complete the table by ticking the correct boxes. Tick only one box on each line.

	<i>Friends</i>	<i>Modern Family</i>
Makes a lot of money from official merchandising		
Some unofficial merchandise available, little official merchandise		
Employed A-list stars when it started		
Employed mostly unknown actors when it started		
Many episodes received over 20 million viewers		
When it was produced there was very little digital technology		
Is not available on Netflix		
Is predominantly available on subscription services		

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Q6. a) Briefly explain why the theme tune of *Friends* is an example of success

.....

.....

.....

b) Briefly explain why production element used in *Modern Family* is an ex

.....

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Q7. In what ways are *Modern Family* and *Friends* influenced by their context of

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Topic Test 5: Sitcoms – Audiences

Q1. Select the correct definition of the term 'active audience'.

- a) Those who are the main target group for the programme
- b) Audience groups who keep fit and take exercise
- c) Audiences who make their own decisions about what they watch
- d) Audiences who accept and believe in what they see on TV

Q2. Select the correct definition of the term 'passive audience'.

- a) A lazy audience group who watch too much TV
- b) Audiences who don't agree with what they watch
- c) Those who are the secondary audience group for the programme
- d) Audiences who accept and believe in what they see on TV

Q3. Find and correct three errors in this sentence.

Friends is aimed at a cult audience of elderly people, who are mainly

Q4. Select the correct word to make each sentence a true statement about sitcoms.

- a) *Modern Family* targets a broad **niche/mass/active** audience in order to get the watershed.
- b) A good example of this is *Modern Family*, whose audience was targeted at the watershed.
- c) *Modern Family* has always been aimed at a wide **primary/secondary/primary** audience.

Q5. Tick the **five most likely** attributes of the typical audience for *Modern Family* and briefly explain why you think *Modern Family* appeals to people with that attribute.

- White, middle class because
- Well-educated because
- Socially, middle class because

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- Professional occupation / aspiring to be professional because
-
- Male because
-
- Female because
-
- Young (18–35) because
-
- Middle-aged (over 55) because
-
- Lower class because
-



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Q6. Fill in the blanks in this paragraph using the words in the box. Use each word

negotiated resistant oppositional

a) _____ suggests people respond to media products take the _____ reading, where they fully accept and understand the meaning. Some people take the c) _____ reading, where they understand the meaning but don't fully accept it. Other people may take the d) _____ reading, where they reject the intended meaning or read the text in ways not intended by the producer.

Q7. Television producers often use psychographics to define their audience. Choose which of the following you think would watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither**, and briefly explain why it has been done for you.

- a) Aspirers like to copy what famous people and celebrities do; they may watch **Family / Friends / both / neither** because *they like to see what they like to see and may copy Rachel's famous hairstyle.*
- b) Reformers like to be socially responsible and change the world for the better. They may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because
- c) Explorers like to try out new things and new technologies; they may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because



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- d) Succeeders are financially stable, and they like established, reliable brands such as *Modern Family / Friends / both / neither* because
- e) Mainstreamers are happy to do what is popular and what everyone else does, such as *Modern Family / Friends / both / neither* because
- f) Strugglers find everyday life difficult and may have financial problems; *Modern Family / Friends / both / neither* because



Q8. How does watching sitcoms fulfil an audience's needs? For each aspect of Berger's gratifications theory, give **one** way watching sitcoms fulfils the need.

Information
Entertainment
Companionship
Identity



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Q9. How does *Modern Family* target, reach and maintain its audience?

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Topic Test 6: Sitcoms – Contexts

Q1. Define the term 'context'.

.....

Q2. Genres change over time, partly because context changes. But some codes are the same. For each code or convention listed below, decide whether it has remained the same (repetition) or whether it has varied (changed over time).

Code/convention	Repetition Stayed the same over time (seen in a lot of sitcoms)
a) Circular narrative	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Aimed at mass audience	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Ensemble cast	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Mainly white attractive cast	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Filmed in front of a studio audience	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Narratives deal with everyday events	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Laugh track	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Men are the main characters	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Workplace setting	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q3. How have changes in the television industry influenced TV programmes? Draw a cause, effect and influence.

Cause	Effect
Increased number of channels	1. Similar sitcoms will be commissioned
Digital broadcast and storage of television programmes	2. More on-demand/box-set viewing
Sitcoms such as <i>Friends</i> proved hugely profitable	3. Each channel has a smaller share of the audience

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Q4. Give an example from the set episode of *Modern Family* that illustrates the

Value/Message	Example from <i>Modern Family</i>
Being tolerant of others	
Family structure shapes a society	
Treat others how you wish to be treated	
Be true to yourself	

Q5. Select the correct word or phrase to make the sentences true.

ABC is a **public service** / **commercial channel** / **both a public service and a commercial channel**. It makes innovative programmes that appeal to **minority/mainstream** audiences.
 NBC is a **public service** / **commercial channel** / **both a public service and a commercial channel**. It makes programmes which **make a profit** / **serve the community**.

Q6. For each context, give an example of how it is shown in *Friends*.

Twixter generation:.....

.....

The American dream:

.....

Feminism:.....

.....

The 'new man':

.....

Patriarchy:.....

.....

Lack of diversity:

.....

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Q7. For each context, give an example of how it is shown in *Modern Family*.

Class system:

.....

Feminism:

.....

Family values:

.....

Patriarchy:

.....

Diversity:

.....

Q8. How far do you think sitcoms are influenced by contexts? In your answer, refer to *Family* and *Friends*.

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Topic Test 1: Sitcoms – Genre

- Q1. Which is the most accurate definition of the term 'genre'?
- Whether audiences prefer a comedy or horror or romance
 - The type or style of media product
 - The codes and conventions of the product
- Q2. What two words is 'sitcom' made from?
- Q3. Answer the questions about the set products for sitcoms [*Modern Family*, *Friends*].
- What is the title of the episode you are studying?
 - What is the title of the episode and series is it?
 - When was it first broadcast?
- Q4. Which of these is usually a code/convention of the genre of sitcom?
- Murder
 - Detectives or police as main characters
 - Home or workplace setting
 - Linear narrative
 - Circular narrative
 - Can be filmed in front of a studio audience
 - Filmed on location
 - Funny/comedy moments
 - Scary/frightening moments
 - Narratives depicting ordinary and extraordinary events
 - Narratives depicting extraordinary events
 - Episodes usually set in a workplace
 - Episodes usually set in a home
 - Ensemble cast
 - One main lead character
 - Usually made in black and white
- Q5. Look at these examples from *Modern Family* and *Friends*. First, say whether *Modern Family* or *Friends* or both sitcoms. Then say which code/convention of sitcoms each is.
- The narratives of the two friends in the same place
 - Each character has a storyline
 - The characters discuss romantic problems
 - The episode is mainly set at home
 - The characters wear unusual and amusing clothes
- Q6. Copy and complete the paragraph below using the terms in the box. Use each word once. You need to use every word.

interested	repetition	variation	conventions
buy	bored	contexts	codes and conventions

Genres often change because of changes in the social, **a)** political or historical changes. There will be a lot of **c)** of codes and conventions of the genre. This applies to all media products. However, there will also be some **b)** of the **f)**, and new and **d)** introduced. This helps to keep the audience **e)** interested.

- Q7. Every sitcom brings something new to the genre. For each sitcom [*Modern Family*, *Friends*], say one aspect that was introduced new when it was released.
- Q8. 'The genre of sitcom has essentially stayed the same over the years.' How far do you agree with this statement? In your answer, refer to the set episode of *Modern Family* and *Friends*.

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Q8. Look at the image from *Modern Family*. Add the connotations for each denoted by the questions.



Modern Family Season 8, Episode 2. © ABC, Lloyd-Levitan, Picador 2016

- a) Connotations of Alex's costume
 - b) Connotations of Clare's costume
 - c) Connotations of Clare's movements/posture
 - d) Connotations of the setting
 - e) What camera shot is used?
 - f) How do visual codes create humour in this scene?
- Q9. Explain how sitcoms use visual codes to create meaning. Refer to the set episode in your answer.



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Topic Test 3: Sitcoms – Representation

Q1. Match the words with the definitions.

Term	Definition
a) Stereotype	1. A representation which is very different
b) Countertype	2. Where certain social groups are represented
c) Representation	3. Where certain social groups are not represented
d) Over-representation	4. A fixed and sometimes oversimplified image of people
e) Under-representation	5. How media language is used to convey a message

Q2. Copy and complete these sentences with either *'Friends'* or *'Modern Family'*

- _____ has been accused of under-representation as it features very few LGBT characters.
- _____ may be seen as feminist as there are as many main female characters as male.
- _____ could be seen as patriarchal as there are fewer female characters than male.
- _____ uses character archetypes.
- _____ shows more diversity in the characters.

Q3. True or false?

- Representations in the media are important as many people believe what they see on TV is real.
- Representations in the media always reflect reality.

Q4. Use the words in the box to copy and complete the paragraph. Use each word once.

narrative
 represent
 traditional

Episode 1 of *Friends* can be considered **a)** in some ways as it focuses on the character Rachel Green and her rejecting a **c)** role as a wife. Instead she tries to support her

Q5. Look at the image of Lily's room in *Modern Family*. For each aspect below, be specific about the representation gender and sexuality it constructs.



- Camryn's and Mitchell's costume
- Camryn's and Mitchell's posture/movements
- Lily's costume
- The mural
- The colour palette

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- Q6. Select the most accurate definition of the term 'patriarchal'.
- Where society is organised for the benefit of men rather than women
 - A sexist society
 - A society where women are objectified

- Q7. Look at the image of Gloria from *Modern Family*.
For each aspect below, briefly explain how it represents Gloria in a **patriarchal**



Modern Family Season 8, Episode 2. © ABC, Lloyd-Levitan, Picador 2016

- Choice of actor
- Costume
- Camerawork
- Dialogue
- Role in narrative

- Q8. What are conveyed by the representations in *Modern Family*? Briefly
- Representations of men (e.g. Jay, Phil, Mitchell, Cameron, Luke, Manny)
 - Representations of women (e.g. Gloria, Claire, Haley, Alex, Lily)
 - Representations of younger people (e.g. Haley, Alex, Luke, Manny, Lily)
 - Representations of older people (e.g. Jay)

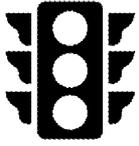
- Q9. How far are representations influenced by contexts? In your answer, refer to *Family and Friends*.

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Topic Test 4: Sitcoms – Industries

Q1. Choose the most accurate definition of the media term 'green light'.



- a) Cars can drive forwards
- b) A sitcom is going to make a profit
- c) An idea for a programme will go into production
- d) The production company enjoyed the pilot

Q2. Answer the questions about the sitcoms.

- a) Which network was *Friends* first broadcast on in America?
- b) Which channel was *Friends* first broadcast on in the UK?
- c) Name one of the producers/writers of *Friends*
- d) Which channel was *Modern Family* first broadcast on in America?
- e) Name the parent company for *Modern Family*

Q3. Copy and complete the paragraph below with the words in the box. Use the

PG watershed OFCOM BBFC Federal Communications

In the USA, television programmes are regulated by the **a)**. They awarded *Friends* in the UK, *Friends* was given an age rating of **c)**.

In the UK, television programmes are monitored by **d)** but DVD releases are

Modern Family was shown before the **f)**. In the UK, *Modern Family* has an age rating of **e)** and

parents would still need to be responsible for their children engaging with the programme.

Q4. Assign the terms in the box to the correct stage of the production process (p).

Network commissioning Editing Film on set Prepare a pitch Scriptwriting
 Hire a show runner Network checks the programme matches Casting
 Network picks up the programme Hire a production team

Q5. For each statement below, say whether it applies to '*Friends*', '*Modern Family*' or both.

- Makes a lot of money from official merchandising
- Some unofficial merchandise available, little official merchandise
- Employed A-list stars when it started
- Employed mostly unknown actors when it started
- Many episodes received over 20 million viewers
- When it was produced, there was very little digital technology
- Is now available on Netflix
- Is predominantly available on subscription services

Q6. a) Briefly explain why the theme tune of *Friends* is an example of successful music.

b) Briefly explain why product placement used in *Modern Family* is an example of successful product placement.

Q7. In what ways are *Modern Family* and *Friends* influenced by their context of production?

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Q7. Television producers often use psychographics to define their audience. Choose below would watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither**, and briefly explain why it has been done for you.

- Aspirers like to copy what famous people and celebrities do; they may watch **Family / Friends / both / neither** because *they like to see what celebrities do and may copy Rachel's famous hairstyle.*
- Reformers like to be socially responsible and change the world for the better; they may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because ...
- Explorers like to try out new things and new technologies; they may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because ...
- Succeeders are financially stable, and they like established, reliable brands; they may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because ...
- Materialists are happy to do what is popular and what everyone else is doing; they may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because ...
- Strugglers find everyday life difficult and may have financial problems; they may watch **Modern Family / Friends / both / neither** because ...

Q8. How does watching sitcoms fulfil an audience's needs? For each aspect of Maslow's gratifications theory, give **one** way watching sitcoms fulfils the need.

- Information
- Entertainment
- Companionship
- Identity

Q9. How does *Modern Family* target, reach and maintain its audience?



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Topic Test 6: Sitcoms – Contexts

- Q1. Define the term 'context'.
- Q2. Genres change over time, partly because contexts change. But some codes are the same. For each code or convention listed below, decide whether it has remained the same (repetition) or whether it has varied/changed over time.
- Circular narrative
 - Aimed at mass audience
 - Ensemble cast
 - Mainly white middle class cast
 - Filmed in front of a studio audience
 - Narratives deal with everyday events
 - Late 19th century track
 - Men are the main characters
 - Home or workplace setting
- Q3. How have changes in the television industry influenced TV programmes? Match the cause and influence.

Cause	Effect	Influence
Increased number of channels	1. Similar sitcoms will be commissioned	a) Overcrowding
Digital broadcast and storage of television programmes	2. More on-demand/box-set viewing	b) Television networks
Sitcoms such as <i>Friends</i> proved hugely profitable	3. Each channel has a smaller share of the audience	c) A smaller audience

- Q4. Give an example from the set episode of *Modern Family* that illustrates the following:
- Being tolerant of others
 - Families come in different shapes and sizes
 - Treat others how you wish to be treated
 - Be tolerant of yourself
- Q5. Copy the paragraph below and select the correct word or phrase to make the text correct.
- ABC is a **public service / a commercial channel / both a public service and a commercial channel** and it makes innovative programmes that appeal to **minority/mainstream** audiences. NBC is a **public service / a commercial channel / both a public service and a commercial channel** and it makes programmes which **make a profit / serve the community**.
- Q6. For each context, give an example of how it is shown in *Friends*.
- Twixter generation
 - The American dream
 - Feminism
 - The 'new man'
 - Patriarchy:
 - Lack of diversity:
- Q7. For each context, give an example of how it is shown in *Modern Family*.
- Class system
 - Feminism
 - Family values
 - Patriarchy
 - Diversity
- Q8. How far do you think sitcoms are influenced by contexts? In your answer, refer to *Modern Family* and *Friends*.

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Preview of Questions Ends Here

This is a limited inspection copy. Sample of questions ends here to avoid students previewing questions before they are set. See contents page for details of the rest of the resource.

Answers

Topic Test 1: Sitcoms – Genre

Q1. The type or style of media product [1]

Q2. Situation/situational [1]
and comedy [1]

Q3. [6]

	<i>Modern Family</i>	
What is the title of the episode you are studying?	A Stereotypical Day	Am It A Get
Which episode and season is it?	Season 8, Episode 2	Sea
When was it first broadcast?	2016	199

Q4. [7]

- Home or workplace setting
- Circular narrative
- Can be filmed in front of a studio audience
- Funny/comedy moments
- Narratives deal with domestic, personal, ordinary and everyday events
- Episodes usually last for about half an hour
- Ensemble cast

Q5. [10]

Example	<i>Modern Family, Friends, or both?</i>	
The narratives begin in the same place	<i>Modern Family</i>	Circular na
Each character has a storyline	<i>Modern Family</i>	Ensemble
The characters discuss romantic problems	<i>Friends</i>	Domestic/
The episode is mainly set at home	<i>Modern Family</i>	Home or v
The characters wear unusual and amusing clothes	<i>Friends</i>	Funny/com

Q6. [7]

- a) cultural
- b) contexts
- c) repetition
- d) recognise
- e) variation
- f) codes and conventions
- g) interested

Q7. Answers such as: [2]

- *Modern Family*: Mockumentary-style sitcom / focus on different strands of the lives of characters
- *Friends*: ensemble cast sitcom / not family as main relationships / focus on young adults

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Q8. [10]

Each bullet point below may be worth 2 or 3 marks if there is enough explanation / and *Modern Family*. Answers should also include some justified conclusions about whether things have stayed the same. Answers may include points such as:

Stayed the same:

- The 'situation' traps or limits the protagonists, e.g. any of the family homes in New York and 'unsuccessful' life in New York
- There is a focus on comedy
- A small group of protagonists in a multi-camera ensemble
- A focus on a group of friends and couples rather than on a family
- A focus on 'lovable' characters
- A circular narrative where characters tend to return to the same point in life

Change:

- *Modern Family* has a mockumentary style where the cast break the fourth wall in 'confessional' segments on the sofa.
- A larger cast in *Modern Family* could have provided too many narratives for the character is intrinsically linked through their family tree.
- Narratives and representations change in order to reflect changes in the social context.
- *Modern Family* highlights increasing variations to the 'nuclear family' as well as gender and age.
- Narratives make a return to placing the family at the centre of the comedy rather than friends or work colleagues.
- *Friends* popularised the 'ensemble of friends' model of sitcoms. Prior to this, there were many sitcoms, and there was often one lead character; this reflected changes in the social context.

Conclusions

- Answers may conclude that sitcoms have or haven't changed significantly, or that changes have been introduced due to changes in the social, cultural and political context

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Topic Test 2: Sitcoms – Media Language

- Q1. Answers such as: [1]
- A camera shot which establishes/shows the general location/setting of the scene
 - A very long shot of the outside of a building or a city, used to establish the genre

Q2. Yes [1]

Q3. [10]

Audio codes

- dialogue
- non-diegetic sound
- score
- laugh track

Visual codes

- costumes
- props
- setting

Technical codes

- high-angle shot
- editing
- close-up

Q4. [3]

Propp suggested that most stories have ~~completely different~~ *similar / the same* main characters are the hero and the ~~donor~~ *villain*. The hero is usually on a hero's journey to achieve something.

Q5. [4]

- a) Sitcoms usually have a ~~circumstantial~~ *single/multistranded* narrative because characters end up in a situation they started.
- b) Sitcoms often have a ~~single~~ *single/multistranded* narrative which focuses on a range of characters.
- c) Sitcoms usually begin with ~~enigmas/closure~~ *enigmas/closure* and end with ~~enigmas/closure~~ *enigmas/closure*.

Q6. [6]

1. Equilibrium – Lily is playing with her new friend Tom.
2. Disruption – Lily calls Tom a 'weirdo'.
3. Resolution – Cameron and Mitchell get to the bottom of Lily's outburst.

Q7. Answers such as: [6]

- a) Connotations of wedding dress:
She is getting married
- b) Connotations of newspapers on the table:
Intellectual / relaxed / they spend a lot of time there
- c) Connotations of sitting with feet up:
Relaxed/casual/informal
- d) Connotations of Ross holding coffee cup and looking down:
Depressed/worried/tense
- e) What camera shot is used?
Long shot
- f) How do the visual codes create humour in this scene?
- Contrast of the wedding dress with the casual clothes of the other characters
 - Surprising to see a woman in a wedding dress in a casual coffee shop as it is not a typical setting for a wedding



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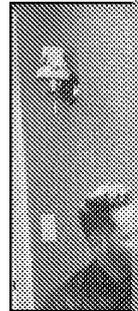
Modern Family

- Q8. [6]
- Connotations of Alex's costume:
She is ill / quite childish / conservative pyjamas to match character
 - Connotations of Claire's costume:
She is dressed for work / busy, working mum / dark suit connotes her seniority at work
 - Connotations of Claire's movements/posture:
Looking at Luke questioningly / suggesting Alex is a 'bummer' / encouraging agreement from Luke
 - Connotations of the setting:
Typical family home, often used in sitcoms, relatable to the audience as it is quite ordinary
 - What camera angles are used?
 - How do visual codes create humour in this scene?
 - Alex is clearly the focus of the scene and looks frantic although she is clearly in charge
 - gesture codes connote she is in charge and as Luke and Phil are looking at her
 - Phil's slightly bemused facial expression creates humour
 - The setting is quite cluttered, hence the reason for Alex's outburst, which is relatable to the audience
 - Claire's body language connotes her fake surprise at Alex's behaviour as she tries to encourage her family members to think Alex is the 'bummer' in the family, not Claire
- Q9. [8]
- The short, catchy theme tune is typical of the genre and acts as a support to the main title. The theme tune also introduces the members of the family during each beat. The theme tune has a jazz-like feel and also feels like an introduction. The jazz-type music with the drums feels suitable for the genre.
 - Modern Family* is a mockumentary – a subgenre of the sitcom. Therefore, in the show, humour is created through the interviews which the characters take part in at points throughout the episode where they reveal themselves honestly, which is often very amusing for the viewer.
 - A typical sitcom convention to signal comedic scenes to the audience is the laugh track. The use of a single camera production and not filmed in front of a live studio audience also adds realism to the show, as it is a mockumentary which is meant to document real life. It can also be argued that modern audiences do not need to be signalled when to laugh.
 - Verbal humour is the most typical convention of sitcoms. This is shown across the episode through Claire's barbed remarks to Alex about her being a nerd ('surely there will be a nerd in every family'), Phil's concerns for Lily, and Jay's conversation with his new neighbour about the 'way' for his new neighbour's surname.
 - Phil's monologues, including talking to himself, as well as pummeling on the broken door at the beginning also is amusing for the audience.
 - The diegetic laughter of Claire's employees which stops promptly whenever she speaks provides a basis for Claire's quest for the episode.
 - Alex's angry outbursts also create humour.

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Topic Test 3: Sitcoms – Representation

- Q1. [5]
 a) 4
 b) 1
 c) 5
 d) 2
 e) 3
- Q2. [5]
 a) *Friends*
 b) *Friends*
 c) *Modern Family*
 d) *Modern Family*
 e) *Modern Family*
- Q3. [2]
 a) True
 b) False
 Representations in the media only reflect one version of reality and are of view.
- Q4. [4]
 a) feminist
 b) narrative
 c) traditional
 d) independent
- Q5. Answers such as the following, with alternative answers accepted if they are appropriate
- Cameron and Mitchell's costume:
 Cameron and Mitchell mirror each other in a way as they are both smartly dressed in shirts. This could be considered a masculine dress code, but also plays on stereotypes that people who are gay are very well put together.
 - Cameron and Mitchell's posture/movements:
 Here, stereotypes are subverted in a way. Cameron and Mitchell are clearly very loving parents and care for their children deeply and so the ideology of the sitcom is portraying a 'modern family' is clearly very successful.
 - Lily's costume:
 Lily is stereotypically dressed for a young girl, conforming to gender norms.
 - The mural:
 Clearly the mural is satire and is used to break down the stereotype of the extrovert or 'over the top' gay person. However, it could also suggest the security of Cameron and Mitchell's relationship and how comfortable they are that Lily is very accepting and supporting of her fathers' relationship and identity.
 - The colour palette:
 The colour palette is soft and feminine, clearly conforming to the gender and sex roles.



Modern Family
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Q6. a) [1]

- Q7. Answers such as the following, with alternative answers accepted if they are appropriately justified [5]

Choice of actor:

Considerably younger than Jay, slender, Columbian; likely to be seen as attractive, or even 'exotic', by men

Costume:

Tight jeans emphasise her legs, and the cut of her blouse is not figure hugging it does emphasise her physique which is stereotypically sexy and creates male gaze.

Camera:

The camera does not focus on Gloria and she is kept in a position behind Jay, showing

Dialogue:

Despite the stereotype suggesting that she may be fiery and passionate, Gloria is calm and refers to Gloria as 'my' wife, indicating possession along with his gestures.



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Role in narrative:

Her role in this episode is very stereotyped and satirised as she is mostly concerned and clearly has an issue with breaking remotes. This is a very soft, comical narrative that has a job with power.

Q8. 2 marks for each point that is briefly explained. Answers such as: [8]

Representations of men (e.g. Jay, Phil, Mitchell, Cameron, Luke, Manny) [2]

- Men are dominant as there are a lot more men in the episode
- It reflects a patriarchal society where men are dominant as there are more men
- Men are portrayed as foolish and incapable, such as Phil's overreaction to being stealing Alex's laptop

Representations of women (e.g. Gloria, Claire, Haley, Alex, Lily) [2]

- Women are represented positively and in positions of power as Claire clearly is where she holds a lot of power. Alex also demonstrates power and control over
- Although Claire's dress codes show her as being very professional, Gloria conforms to dressing in a way that clearly shows her figure and beauty
- There are an equal number of women in supporting roles, showing an increase in a society, but traditional stereotypes can still be seen in Gloria and Haley

Representations of younger people (e.g. Haley, Alex, Luke, Manny, Lily, Joe) [2]

- On the whole, the younger generations of the family conform to common stereotypes that are relate to and find humorous – for example, Luke taking short cuts with his studies
- However, Lily shows a greater level of maturity and understanding when discussing about the mural with her fathers

Representations of older people (e.g. Jay) [2]

- Jay is the head of the family, which conforms to patriarchal expectations
- However, while he illustrates the fact the older generations are often unwilling to change traditional, controversial beliefs, he does express his feelings to Mitchell with a desire to be able to grow with changing views and experiences

Q9. Each bullet point below may be worth 2 or 3 marks if there is enough explanation / justification and the set episode is *Modern Family*. Answers should also include some justified comparison to representations of women influenced by contexts. Answers may include points such as: [12]

- It is a male-dominated programme which may accurately reflect the social context of the time. However, Claire, Alex and Lily show a greater level of control and power within their family, showing a greater lean towards more feminist ideals
- Alex is a key character to the narrative – even though she does not do a one to one action within the Dunphy family happens around and to her, showing an increase in power
- However, there are still some traditional stereotypes of women that remain. Gloria is also because of her nationality – she is clearly fiery and has broken many remote stereotypes as 'dumb' in that she has lost her job and is trying to hide it.
- Women also show power even in the minor characters. Though we only see her in the beginning, she is both socially conscious and wanting change within society, and stereotyped in a way that causes Manny's entire storyline about changing who he is.
- A good deal of the humour within the episode comes from the male characters and slapstick-style set-ups – for example, Phil being stuck in the closet and satirising his own masculinity
- Jay is clearly representative of society in that he is very aware of how his actions affect others, but he still manages to misunderstand and create humour through ignorance by assuming his own perspective
- The representations of relationships show a huge change since *Friends*, as there are now more women and given equal or focal time with the men. This clearly indicates a difference in social values of the time which it was produced.
- In *Friends*, the only gay character was Ross's wife, who conformed to social stereotypes of the time that Ross was foolish for 'marrying a lesbian'. However, given the first colour of the show argued that the show was brave for the time in including a gay character across the 10 seasons, and step/same-sex families. Clearly though, *Modern Family* has moved towards LGBTQ+ in a far more positive way.
- On the whole, representations in *Friends* have been influenced by contexts, and, in contrast to *Modern Family*, it is more of a traditional representation of a family.

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