

Satire and comedy of serious issues

SPEAKING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_2024S_EN

LANGUAGE
English



lingoda



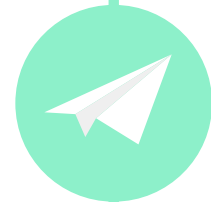


Goals

- Can read, listen to and understand an in-depth text about using comedy and satire for serious issues.
- Can clarify my own view as to whether comedy can influence the real world or not.



Is it right to laugh at serious issues?
Does comedy have the power to
change the world? **Black comedy** and
satire certainly think so.





Types of comedy

What different types of comedy do you like?
What type of comedy is popular in your country?





Serious issues

What would you say are the most serious issues in the world at the moment? Have you seen any comedy sketches about them?

death

politics

war

disaster



Satire and comedy of serious issues

The success of black comedy and satire exposes the ability of humans to laugh in even the most inappropriate or unfortunate circumstances. It seems that no topic is **off limits** in comedies, from discussions of death, through to religion and faith, and even, in some cases, nuclear war in TV shows and films. Moreover, satire, particularly of politics and political figures, is only gaining in popularity in the twenty-first century.





Satire and comedy of serious issues

Black comedies give us an easy way to explore and discuss otherwise taboo issues. They are not only there to make us laugh, but their purpose is to make us think too. Sometimes, we have to laugh to **stave off** complete despair. Approaching an issue such as impending nuclear war with humour allows for a huge relief of stress. Finding a way to bring humour into serious events **lessens the blow**, which is why people are often seen laughing at funerals.



Satire and comedy of serious issues

Satire is a type of humour which is designed to expose stupidity or **vice** in humans, and satire can be directed at individuals, a whole country, or even the world. It often employs the techniques of irony, sarcasm, ridicule and exaggeration.

Like with black comedies, the purpose of satire is to make us laugh, make us think, and possibly even further, to make a change in the world. Satire intends to warn the audience of what the author perceives as corruption in society, in the hope that society will **rise up** and bring change.





Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps using the words from the text.

stave off

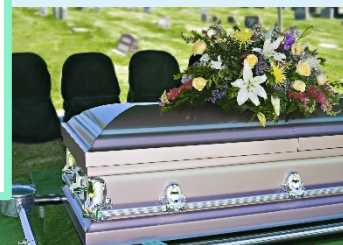
lessen the blow

vice

off limits

rise up

1. Do you think it is right that satirists expose human _____?
2. Do you agree that sometimes we have to laugh to _____ despair?
3. Have you ever been in a difficult situation when laughter was able to _____?
4. Are there any topics you would consider _____ in a comedy?
5. Do you believe that comedy can make a society _____?





Tell your teacher

Now, answer the questions on the previous slide with your teacher.





Black comedies

**Can you think of any
examples of black
comedies?**

**What issues might they deal
with?**

Six Feet Under

*The Invention of
Lying*

Dr Strangelove



Types of humour

These four types of humour were mentioned in the text. Do you know what each one is? Do you find that type of humour funny?



irony

sarcasm

ridicule

exaggeration



Get ready to listen

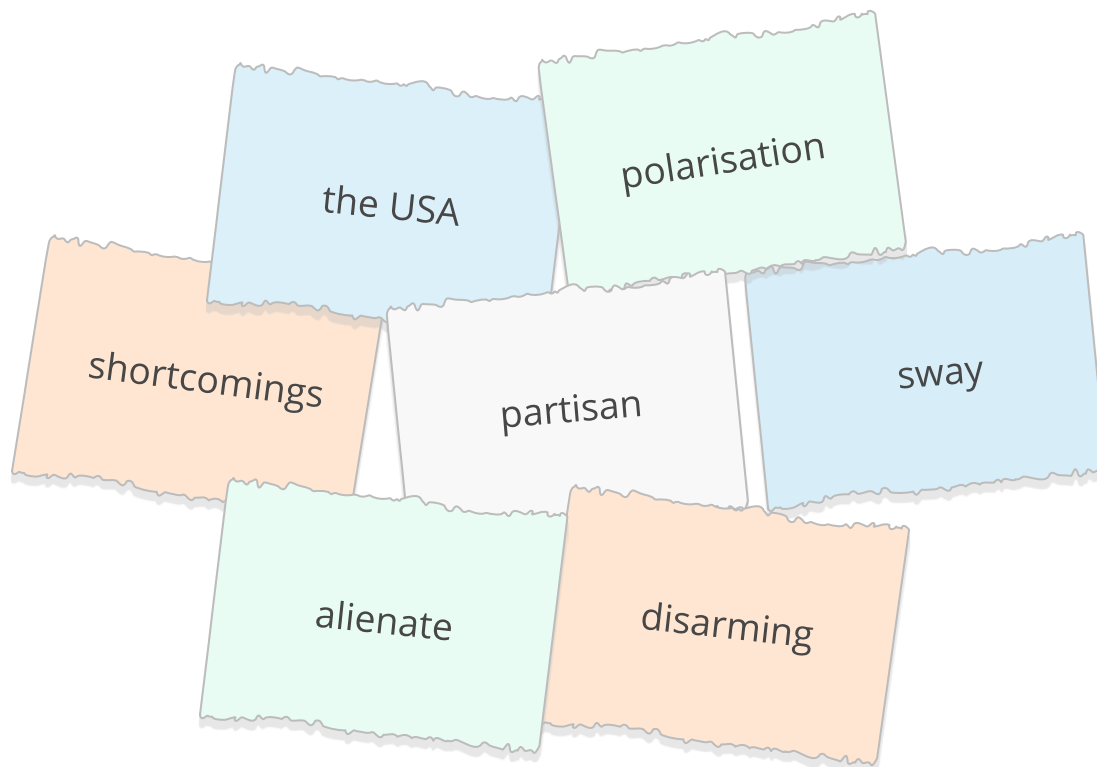


The next few slides will focus on
training your listening comprehension



New vocabulary

**Listen to your teacher. What order do these words come in?
Can you build sentences around them?**





True or false?

	TRUE	FALSE
1. Political cartoons in newspapers are not satirical.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Satirists on TV are particularly popular in the US.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Satire tries to sway viewer's opinions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. We know that satire can make a real difference to society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. No one thinks that satire can increase polarisation in society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Some believe that laughter can bring people together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Tell your teacher

Answer these questions based on the text.



1

Do you look at political cartoons in newspapers? Can you remember any famous ones?



Tell your teacher

Answer these questions based on the text.



1

Do you look at political cartoons in newspapers? Can you remember any famous ones?



2

Do you watch satirists on television? Why or why not?



Tell your teacher

Answer these questions based on the text.



1

Do you look at political cartoons in newspapers? Can you remember any famous ones?



2

Do you watch satirists on television? Why or why not?



3

Do you think cartoons or TV hosts would be able to sway your opinion on a political issue?



What do you think?



Do you think that TV satirists
polarise or bring together
diverse audiences?



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Answer key

Exercise p. 15

1F, 2T, 3T, 4F, 5F, 6T

Exercise p. 9

1. vice, 2. stave off, 3. lessen the blow, 4. off limits, 5. rise up

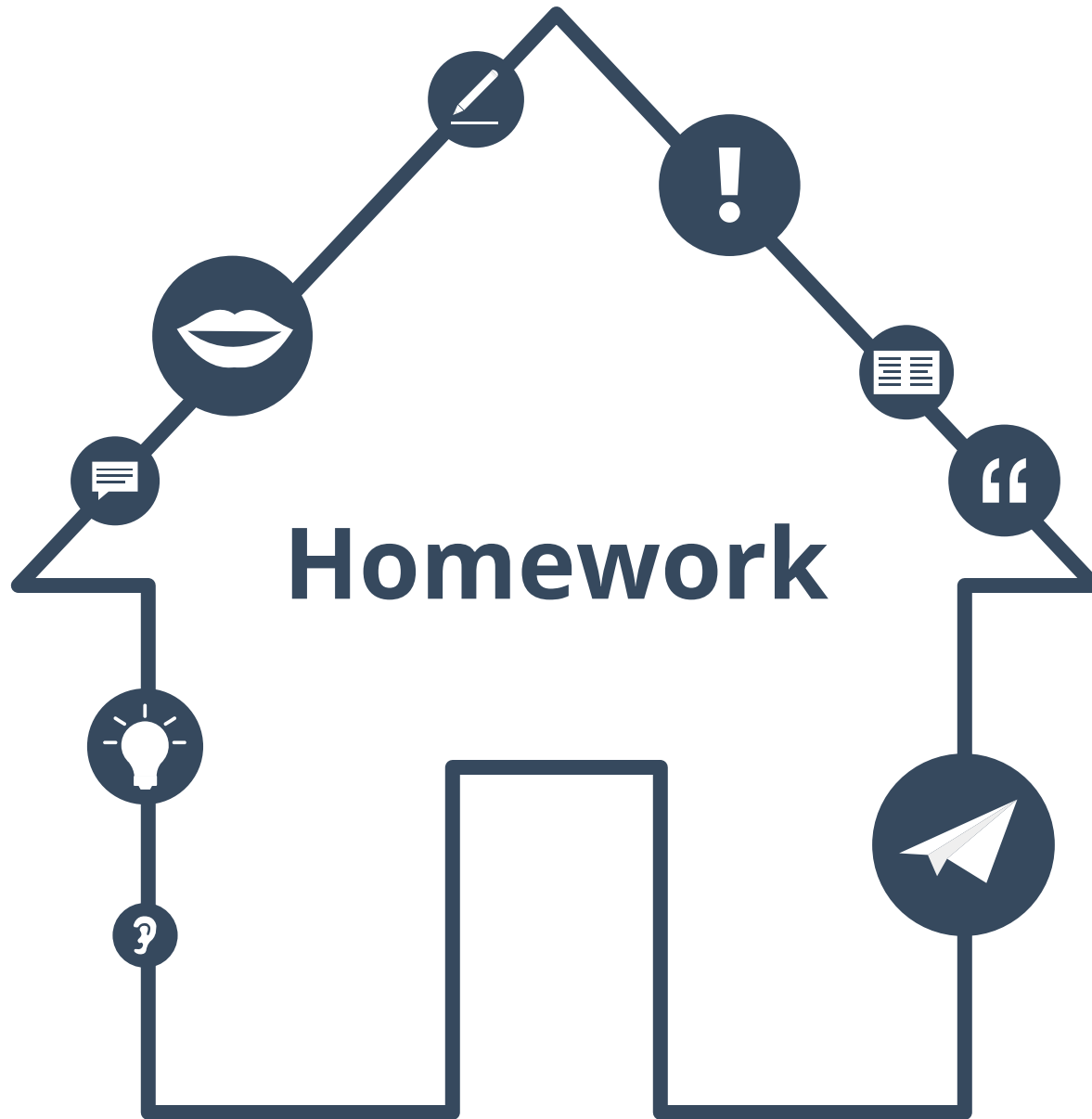


Transcription

Exercise p. 15

Most political cartoons we see in newspapers are satirical. They play an important role in bringing leaders down to the level of the people, and engage people in politics by making them laugh as well as sending a short and simple message. Satirists on television are also extremely popular, particularly in **the USA**, where they appear nightly to give a commentary on what they see as the **shortcomings** of their leaders. Both political cartoons and satirists on television want to persuade viewers of their point of view: they try to **sway** your opinion without you even realising they're doing it.

A question remains as to whether satire, and particularly at the present time the late-night TV shows in the USA, can make any real difference. Some say that **partisan TV** hosts **alienate** viewers who don't agree with them, increasing **polarisation**. Others believe that the **disarming** nature of laughter makes it more difficult to get angry, and can bring new perspectives to people, and indeed can bring people together.





Match the beginnings and the endings

1. There are no topics which are...

a. lessen the blow in serious situations.

2. Satire exposes vice...

b. irony, ridicule and sarcasm.

3. We often use dark comedy to...

c. alienating those who disagree with them.

4. Satire can include...

d. shortcomings in society.

5. Satire exposes the...

e. off limits in black comedy.

6. Some TV satirists are accused of...

f. disarming.

7. Laughter is thought to be...

g. in humans and society.



Writing activity

Write a short text about your understanding of satire and black comedy.

satire

black comedy

rise up

sway

partisan

polarisation





Homework answer key

Exercise p. 24

1e, 2g, 3a, 4b, 5d, 6c, 7f



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