



BBC WORLD SERVICE LEARNING ENGLISH



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BBC Learning English – Keep your English Up to Date

Lesson Plan: Teacher's notes

Lesson 6: Docusoap

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: TV programme types

Language: Blend words (Portmanteau words): Docusoap

Aims: Listening skills – A short talk
Vocabulary: Understanding and creating blend words

Materials:

Worksheet 1	–	Introductory speaking and vocabulary exercises, listening section 1
Worksheet 2	-	Listening section 2
Worksheet 3	–	Extra work: Vocabulary and Language
Tapescript	–	Available in teacher's notes
Recording of the talk	–	Available online at bbclearningenglish.com

This plan was downloaded from:

bbclearningenglish.com/radio/specials/1728_uptodate/page7.shtml

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LESSON STAGES

A

Explain to the students that they are going to listen to a talk by Professor Crystal about the way the English language changes. This particular talk is about language that has come from television.

B

Hand out **Student Worksheet 1**. Students do **Speaking Exercise 1** in small groups or pairs. There is a definition of 'soap opera' in the answers.

C

Students do the **Vocabulary Exercise 2**, without dictionaries at first.
Practise the pronunciation of the vocabulary, as they will hear it in the talk.

D

Students read **Listening Exercise 3** and then listen to Section 1 of the talk.
They answer the questions.

Students listen again and answer **Listening Exercise 4**

E

Hand out **Student Worksheet 2**

Students answer **Listening Exercise 5** and **6**

Students listen to section 2 of the talk and check their answers for **Listening exercise 5** and **6**

F

Students try to answer **Listening Exercise 7**. They listen again to **Listening Section 2** to check/complete their answers.

G

If you wish to do some extra work with the class, hand out **Student Worksheet 3**

For the vocabulary exercise, give the students copies of the tapescript and play the complete talk as they read.

For the language exercises, make sure you show clearly how the blend words are formed from the original words – perhaps use different colours if you are using a whiteboard. Remember, the students make their own new words in the final exercise: they do not have to make already existing words.

Lesson 6: Docusoap

TAPESCRIPTS

Listening Section 1

I was watching a docusoap on the television the other day. A what, you might be saying? A docu-soap. Well, it's another one of these blend-words, where two words have come together to make a third word. In this particular case, I'm talking about a TV genre, which mixes a documentary programme and a soap. Now the documentary programmes we all know, and these are particular fly-on-the wall documentaries we're talking about now, where people are carrying on their everyday lives, doing their ordinary things and yet being televised or radio-recorded at the same time.

Listening Section 2

But why soap? Why are these things called soap operas? Well that goes back to the 1930s and it was probably because some of the early sponsors of radio programmes at the time and television programmes were soap manufacturers, and so the idea came that a soap was one of these everyday, you know, washing machine kind of dramas. And so a docusoap is a documentary attempt to take one of these programmes and put it into an everyday circumstance.

It's not the only word of its kind – docudrama is another one, for a dramatised film based on a semi-fictional interpretation of real events. Oh, and don't forget, it's used in the novel as well, in literature. You talk about "factions" – documentary fiction in the novel – it's a blurring of reality and fiction: very popular these days!

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ANSWER KEY

SPEAKING

- 1.
- c. A soap opera is a type of TV programme. It is a drama serial. There are regular episodes every week. The same characters appear each week, and the stories concern the typical lives of these characters. The stories are often about the difficult relationships between the characters, who are often part of the same large family.

VOCABULARY

- 2.
- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| a. A blend | a mixture of two or more different things |
| b. A sponsor | someone who gives financial support to something |
| c. fiction | an imagined story, not fact |
| d. a manufacturer | a maker or producer of something |
| e. a genre | a type or kind of film or programme |
| f. circumstance | situation or context |

LISTENING SECTION 1

- 3.
- a. Docusoap
b. Documentary and soap opera
- 4.
- The best definition is **c. These programmes show normal people doing normal things**

LISTENING SECTION 2

- 5.
- c. Because soap manufactures sponsored the early programmes of this type.
- 6.
- Docudrama and faction are both real words.
- 7.
- a. True
b. True
c. False – it is based on real events, but with actors playing characters from those events
d. False – it is used to describe a type of literature

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EXTRA WORK

1.
 - a. televised
 - b. semi-fictional
 - c. a blurring of

LANGUAGE

2.
 - a. Docusoap : Documentary and soap (opera)
Docudrama: Documentary and drama
Faction: Fact and fiction
 - b. Brunch: breakfast and lunch
Smog: smoke and fog
Infomercial: information and commercial
Advertainment: advertisement and entertainment
Camcorder: camera and recorder
Liger: lion and tiger
3.
 - a. Spanglish
 - b. Geep
 - c. Microsoft (US company)
 - d. Dancercise (a group activity in a gym)

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Docusoaps

WORKSHEET 1

You are going to listen to a short talk given by Professor David Crystal about language change and new developments in English.

SPEAKING

1. Discuss these questions with other students

- a. How often do you watch TV?
- b. Do you ever watch these kinds of programmes?
- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| the news | cartoons | music shows |
| documentaries | dramas | chat shows |
| comedy shows | the weather | crime dramas |
- c. Do you know what a soap opera is?

VOCABULARY

2. Match these words and phrases to their definitions

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| a. a blend | a maker or producer of something |
| b. a sponsor | a type or kind of film or programme |
| c. fiction | situation or context |
| d. a manufacturer | an imagined story, not fact |
| e. a genre | someone who gives financial support to something |
| f. circumstance | a mixture of two or more different things |

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Docusoaps

LISTENING SECTION 1

3. Now, listen to Professor Crystal talking about a new genre of TV programme and answer these questions.

- a. What is the name for the new programme genre?
- b. Which two TV genres does this new one mix together?

4. Listen again and decide which is the best definition of a docusoap.

- a. These programmes show the everyday lives of celebrities
- b. These programmes show normal people doing incredible things
- c. These programmes show normal people doing normal things

WORKSHEET 2

LISTENING SECTION 2

5. Why do you think some TV dramas are called soap operas?

- a. Because the characters sing during the drama
- b. Because the characters often wash during the drama
- c. Because soap companies originally paid for the shows
- d. Because many of the actors also appeared in soap adverts

6. Which two of the following three blend words are real?

docudrama

faction

fictumentary

Listen to Section 2 of the talk and check your ideas for questions 5 and 6. Were you correct?

7. Are the following sentences true or false

- a. The soap companies sponsored the programmes more than fifty years ago
- b. These early programmes were dramas about everyday life
- c. A docudrama is a story based on imaginary events
- d. Faction is a type of TV programme

Listen again to check your answers.

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Docusoaps

WORKSHEET 3 - EXTRA WORK

VOCABULARY

1: Look at the tape script and find words or phrases that mean the following.

- a. to be shown on television
- b. half true, half imaginary
- c. making the separation between two things less clear

LANGUAGE

1: Docusoap, docudrama and faction are all blend words.

- a. What are the original words that they come from?
- b. Look at these blend words. What do you think are the original words?

brunch is _____ blended with _____

smog is _____ blended with _____

infomercial is _____ blended with _____

advertainment is _____ blended with _____

camcorder is _____ blended with _____

liger is _____ blended with _____

2: What do you think are the blend words?

- a. Spanish blended with English is _____
- b. A goat blended with a sheep is a _____
- c. Microprocessor blended with software is _____
- d. dance blended with exercise is _____

3: Can you think of some new blend words for English?

- a. Think about new animals produced from two existing animals
- b. Think about new languages, new meals, new sports, new ways of living