

Listening/Viewing Activity – Stand-up Comedy Shows

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- Objectives** : To enable listeners to enjoy stand-up comedies to gain a sense of humour and to tap it as a source for developing linguistic competence.
- Text** : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZiOgWmWhXs>
Manoj Prabhakar's show. Why Indians should NOT study Engineering.
- Duration** : 5.30 minutes.
- Preparation** : Watch/listen to as many comedies as possible to relax, paying attention to the ideas and the strategies adopted by them.

Procedure :

Setting the context and the task:

Manoj Prabhakar is a Chennai based comic and a software Engineer by profession. His X (twitter) profile states: true to his image, "Electronics Engine here. Introvert. Hypocrite. Applause addicted. I write and speak sentences."

<http://www.evamstanduptamasha.in/manoj-prabakar/>

The site mentions that on stage he puts on his best efforts trying to be funny, quirky and intelligent. Off stage, he is an introvert and mostly frustrated. His humorous take on his middle class upbringing, his work life, his education and everything else that frustrates him, have been well received thus far. He wishes to continue the same until he feels happy about himself one day.

Although the shows appear to be spontaneous they are well rehearsed before the performance.

Task : All comic shows are built around a theme. Identify the theme and the other related ideas presented.

Process : Watch the show to enjoy the performance for the first time, not worrying about the takeaways.
While watching for the second time, attempt to figure out the central theme around which the show happens.
Jot down the ideas while watching:
Engineering education in India:
Placements.
Nature of job...

Notice how the humour is created – play of words, personal references, connecting unrelated things, gestures and so forth.

Identify examples for each:

Play of the word – (Examples: important and impotent, address proof for the rented house)

Revisit it at your convenience to internalize and attempt something along the lines.

Learning outcomes:

1. Learners recognize the significance of humour, even for a causal communication, which can be generated based on common experiences but depending on one's ability to play with words.
2. Learners realize that it is a skill and can be cultivated but it has to be natural and spontaneous when presented.

Further practice:

Watch/listen to different kinds of comic genres, not merely the stand-up, to internalize the strategies to be humorous.

Stand-up Comedy:

There are many **types of comics**; some of the popular ones are stand-up, slapstick, hyperbolic, dark, burlesque, satirical and so on. Comic taste is not the same for all and some even detest certain forms.

<https://www.dailywritingtips.com/20-types-and-forms-of-humor/>

The site explains 20 different forms of comic expressions.

Stand-up comedy is a comic style in which a comedian performs in front of a live audience, usually speaking directly to them. The performer is commonly known as a comic, stand-up comic, stand-up comedian or simply a stand-up. In stand-up comedy the comedian usually recites a fast-paced succession of humorous stories, short jokes called "bits", and one-liners, which constitute what is typically called a monologue, routine or act. Some stand-up comedians use props, music or magic tricks to enhance their acts.

Alexander Babu, Peter Russel, Jerry Seinfeld, Trevor Noah are some of the well-known stand-up comedians.

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