



BBC WORLD SERVICE LEARNING ENGLISH

Soap Operas



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Soap Operas 肥皂剧

The Most Popular Programmes on UK TV 深受欢迎的英国电视节目

Read the text below and do the activity that follows.

阅读下面的短文，然后完成练习：

Watching TV is a very popular pastime in the UK but what kind of programmes do British people like to watch? Well, the **most-watched** TV programmes every week are very popular dramas that are usually on at least four times every week. They are dramas based in one **neighbourhood** that try to depict ordinary life in the UK - we call these dramas 'soap operas' or 'soaps'.

In the early days of TV, there were often dramas on during the day. Back in those days, it was traditional for the husband to go out to work and for the wife to stay at home and look after the house and the children. Most of these daytime dramas were aimed at entertaining the **housewives** who would traditionally be at home, probably **doing the washing**. Companies selling **washing powder** would advertise their products at times when these dramas were on, and sometimes those companies would even **sponsor** the drama. Hence the word 'soap'.

So what about the word opera? Well, that's because these dramas are often an **exaggeration** of real life. They are supposed to represent ordinary lives but to make them entertaining, lots of dramatic events like **murders, divorces, affairs** etc. all happen probably much more regularly than they would in a normal neighbourhood.

Most soap operas these days are shown in the evening. Each show will have several different **storylines** happening at once that continue over several shows. The same cast members will appear in every show too.

There are lots of different soaps on in the UK on different channels but there are three main popular ones. 'Coronation Street' has been on since 1960. It is set in a **suburb** of Manchester and it's supposed to represent **working class** life in the north of England. Then there's 'Eastenders' which started in 1985, set in the East End of London and 'Emmerdale', which is set on a farm in Yorkshire, in the north of England.

The BBC even has a soap opera to help you learn English – so if you want to experience one of these dramas in English, 'The Flatmates' would be a good place to start – go to www.bbc.co.uk/china/learningenglish/flatmates.



Glossary 词汇表

pastime - 消遣, 娱乐	most-watched – 收视率最高的
neighbourhood – 邻里关系	to depict –描述, 描写
aimed at -瞄准, 针对	housewives – 家庭主妇
doing the washing – 洗衣服	washing powder – 洗衣粉
advertise –做广告	sponsor – 赞助
hence – 因此	an exaggeration - 夸张, 夸大
murders - 谋杀	divorces – 离婚
affairs - 风流韵事	storylines - 故事情节
cast members – 演员班底, 演员阵容	set – (为故事)设置(时间或地点)背景
a suburb - 市郊	working class – 工人阶层

1. Reading Quiz 阅读测验

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

以下句子哪句是真?哪句是假? 请圈出正确答案。

1. People don't like to watch TV in the UK. True / False
2. The word 'soap' in 'soap opera' refers to washing powder used by housewives to do the washing. True / False
3. The word 'opera' in 'soap opera' refers to the classical singing you hear in the dramas. True / False
4. Soap operas have lots of continuing storylines happening over a few shows. True / False
5. Coronation Street has been on British TV since 1985. True / False

2. People, Places, Objects and Actions 人物, 地点, 物体和行动

Look at the words in the boxes. Decide whether each word relates to a person, a place, an object or an action and put it in the correct column in the table. Two have already been done as examples.

下列框中的单词哪些是分别与人物, 地点, 物体和行动有关的? 请按照下列例子将它们正确地归列到表格中.

People	Places	Objects	Actions
	neighbourhood		watching TV

neighbourhood

watching TV

housewives

cast members

doing the washing

television

suburb

washing powder

farm

3. TV Expressions 与电视有关的表达方式

Match the TV related expressions with the correct definition.

从a-e中为1-5的表达式选出正确的解释。

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. a couch potato | a. someone who is always watching the TV (the telly) and can't live without it |
| 2. reality TV | b. another word for television |
| 3. channel hopping | c. someone who sits on the sofa all day eating and watching TV |
| 4. telly addict | d. TV programmes following real people in real life situations |
| 5. the box | e. going from channel to channel with the remote control (the remote) and being unable to decide what to watch |

Now complete the following sentences with one of the above TV expressions.

用上列表达方式完成以下句子。

1. "_____ is boring. I can see people in real life situations every day – I would much rather watch a drama."
2. "What's on _____ tonight?"
3. My brother is such a _____. All he does is sit at home and watch TV.
4. The problem with TV these days is that there's too many channels to choose from. I'm always _____ and I can never decide what to watch.
5. I love watching TV – I watch it all the time. I don't think I could live without it – I need to watch it for at least three hours every night. I'm such a _____.



4. Wordsearch 单词搜索

Try to find the words associated with television in the puzzle below.

There are ten words to find. Words can be written horizontally (g), vertically (i) or diagonally (m)

请在下面的字谜游戏中，找出与电视有关的英语单词来。

共有10个单词，其组成方式可能以水平的 (g) 垂直的 (i) 或对角的 (m) 形式出现。

p	r	o	g	r	a	m	m	e	f	z	t
a	g	h	t	e	l	j	d	w	e	o	e
o	d	u	s	m	b	a	e	c	i	m	l
c	a	s	s	o	a	p	p	h	e	u	l
d	e	p	i	t	e	d	r	a	m	a	y
e	i	u	c	e	o	q	l	n	t	a	a
p	r	o	g	s	z	r	e	n	i	o	u
i	g	i	a	n	w	p	y	e	a	s	d
c	a	s	t	d	f	k	v	l	s	r	r
t	s	a	d	f	p	v	e	o	i	a	h
e	e	n	w	x	t	r	t	s	a	n	e
t	o	o	a	d	v	e	r	t	i	s	e

remote	cast	channel	telly	depict	drama
programme	storyline	advertise	soap		

Answers 答案

1. Reading Quiz 阅读测验

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

以下句子哪句是真?哪句是假? 请圈出正确答案。

1. People don't like to watch TV in the UK. **False**
2. The word 'soap' in 'soap opera' refers to washing powder used by housewives to do the washing. **True**
3. The word 'opera' in 'soap opera' refers to the classical singing you hear in the dramas. **False**
4. Soap operas have lots of continuing storylines happening over a few shows. **True**
5. Coronation Street has been on British TV since 1985. **False**

3. TV Expressions

Match the TV related expressions with the correct definition.

1. c
2. d
3. e
4. a
5. b

Now complete the following sentences with one of the above TV expressions.

1. "Reality TV is boring. I can see people in real life situations every day – I would much rather watch a drama."
2. "What's on the box tonight?"
3. My brother is such a couch potato. All he does is sit at home and watch TV.
4. The problem with TV these days is that there's too many channels to choose from. I'm always channel hopping and I can never decide what to watch.
5. I love watching TV – I watch it all the time. I don't think I could live without it – I need to watch it for at least three hours every night. I'm such a telly addict.

2. People, Places, Objects and Actions

Look at the words in the boxes. Decide whether each word relates to a person, a place, an object or an action and put it in the correct column in the table.

People	Places	Objects	Actions
cast members	suburb	washing powder	doing the washing
housewives	neighbourhood	television	watching TV
	farm		

4. Wordsearch 单词搜索

p	r	o	g	r	a	m	m	e			t
				e							e
				m				c			l
			s	o	a	p		h			l
d				t		d	r	a	m	a	y
e				e	o			n			
p						r		n			
i							y	e			
c	a	s	t					l			
t									i		
										n	
				a	d	v	e	r	t	i	s
											e