

# SOAS LANGUAGE CENTRE RESOURCES ROOM

## Watching Soap Operas

### ☺ **HOW YOU CAN MAKE THE MOST OF WATCHING SOAP OPERAS – USEFUL TIPS**

Watching soaps can be a useful and amusing way of improving your language skills and immersing yourself in the target culture. You can improve your pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, and speaking. Consider the following tips and activities, adapting them to your level.

- Repeat words and phrases that the characters utter, even if you are not sure what they mean.
  - Write down words that you know and arrange them in groups according to meaning, e.g. food vocabulary etc. Try adding more words to your lists every time you watch.
  - Jot down some unknown words or phrases that are often repeated (there are plenty of these in soaps) and ask your teacher or a native speaker what they mean or try looking them up in the dictionary.
  - If the series is recorded, try turning the volume down and watch the characters' body language and lip movements. Try to guess what they are talking about. Try to say aloud and write down words/phrases that you think they are using, or write down the whole dialogue. Now watch again with the volume up and see if you got it right.
  - Again, if the series is recorded, close your eyes or turn your face away from the TV and listen to the dialogues. Try to visualise how the characters are holding/moving their body, and their facial expressions. Try acting out what you think the characters are doing. Then watch the programme to see if your guesses are right.
  - For recorded programmes, do all of the above activities in turns with a study partner and discuss.
  - Choose one character that you feel you can empathise with. Repeat their lines after them. Try adopting their persona and imitate their speech and body language every now and then.
  - Pick two or three lines of a dialogue and focus intensively on the stress, tone, intonation of the utterance.
  - Try imagining/writing the script for the next episode. What do you think is going to happen next? You can either write down the script, or act out the dialogues in your head. Try to include some phrases that the characters use frequently.
- Keep in mind that different soaps or characters in a soap may be employing different accents. Consult your teacher or another native speaker about this and decide which programme would suit your needs best.

### ☀ **ACTIVITY**

Fill in the table on the reverse side with the following information, if possible in the target language:

1. Make a list of the names of the main characters and give a physical description: height / hair colour etc
2. Try to describe their personality.
3. Write down some representative phrases that the characters have used. You can be as picky as you want!
4. How does each character relate to others in the drama? Describe relationships, e.g. X is Y's boyfriend
5. What is your personal view of each character? Do you like them or not? Do you identify with them?

<b>1. NAME &amp; DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>2. PERSONALITY</b>	<b>3. THEIR FAVOURITE PHRASES</b>	<b>4. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CHARACTERS</b>	<b>5. PERSONAL VIEW</b>

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