

Dr Who & Class

TV CSP

**What we need to
know**

Television CSPs - what we need to study

Episode 1 of Dr Who: An Unearthly Child, 1955

Episode 4 of Class: Co-owner of a Lonely Heart

Media Language: how the television shows communicate their message through mise-en-scene and narrative.

Industry: how the shows are produced and marketed; BBC funding and regulation.

Representation: How certain groups and individuals and ideas / issues are represented in the shows.

Audience: Target audience and audience pleasures.

PLUS: Historical, cultural and social significance of the television shows.

Television will in Media Paper 2 Section A:

Two medium response questions on an extract clip = one worth 8 marks and one worth 12.

One extended essay style response about the whole of the episodes you have studied.

Example questions:

How is the genre of Dr Who: An Unearthly Child demonstrated in this extract? [8 marks]

‘Narrative features grab and hold the audience’s attention’. How far does an analysis of the extract of Dr Who: An Unearthly Child show this to be true? [12 marks]

‘The Science Fiction genre deals with society’s changing hopes and fears.’ To what extent is this true of television drama? Answer with reference to the first episode of Dr Who: An Unearthly Child (1963) and Class, Co-owner of a Lonely Heart (Close Study products) [20 marks]

Language

Key terminology for studying Class:

- **Brand Identity:** how a business presents itself and wants to be perceived by the consumer.
- **Spin Off:** a by-product of another, main product (e.g. this is from the Doctor Who universe).
- **Ethos:** characteristics of a product based on the attitudes it shows.
- **Hybridity:** Two genres or media types combined e.g. Stranger Things is a science fiction / horror television drama.

- **Intertextuality:** When one media text references another media text (e.g. The Doctor appears in Class)
- **Multi-strand:** when a narrative is made up of lots of different storylines

Reminder - TV drama conventions:

- Dramatic narrative, usually linear (with continuity across episodes.) This is called narrative arc e.g. 13 Reasons Why and The Killing where the mystery spans the series.
- Ensemble cast (characters with own storylines). Sometimes an episode will focus more on one character e.g. in LOST.
- Specific technical codes e.g. realistic lighting and editing for social dramas to keep it gritty.
- Use of stereotypical characters to get messages across quickly.
- Narrative formula that is always followed e.g. Casualty (3 Strand); Homeland (multi-strand narrative).
- Common use of flashback, point of view shots, dialogue and voice over, enigma and action codes throughout.

Reminder - Science Fiction conventions (NCIS):

Narrative

- Alien invasion
- Scientific advancement
- Artificial intelligence
- Time travel
- Mutation
- Post-apocalyptic struggles to survive
- Chemical poisoning
- Advanced technology
- Experimentation
- Disease / Contamination
- Space travel

Characters

- Doubles / Doppelgangers / Clones
- Aliens who look like humans
- Aliens who look different
- New species
- Scientists
- People with advanced / superior intelligence
- Robots and advanced AI e.g. computers who can think

Iconography

- Futuristic hair and clothing
- Military uniforms
- Spaceships
- Space suits and helmets
- Futuristic weapons (light sabers / laser guns)
- Laboratories and experimental props
- Prosthetics / make-up
- Colours- blue, silver, grey, green
- Time machines / advanced computers/gadgets

Settings

- Futuristic worlds
- Parallel universes / alternate dimensions
- Different time periods
- Space or other planets
- Dystopian or post-apocalyptic environments
- Laboratories
- Contaminated or toxic environments

Doctor Who: An introduction

- Listed in Guinness World Records as the longest-running science fiction television show in the world with over 800 episodes.
- The Doctor explores the universe in a time-travelling space ship called the TARDIS [Time And Relative Dimension In Space]. The TARDIS has a vast interior but appears smaller on the outside.
- The Doctor travels through space and time preventing evil aliens or people from harming innocent people or changing history.
- The Doctor has gained numerous reoccurring enemies during his travels, including the Daleks and the Cybermen.
- Twelve male actors have headlined the series as the Doctor. The transition from one actor to another is written into the plot of the show with the concept of regeneration into a new incarnation. In 2018 the BBC had their first female incarnation for the thirteenth Doctor.

Doctor Who: An Unearthly Child

Social and historical context

First episode: Saturday, November 23rd, 1963 on the BBC. The plot was a narrative arc (a story over several episodes) involving the Doctor and his companions voyaging 100,000 years into Earth's past to help some cavemen discover fire.

William Hartnell was the first Doctor, as an anti-hero who frequently put his companions in jeopardy for his own curiosity. Daleks made an appearance in the first series, as the arch enemies of the Doctor.

Jodie Whittaker took over the role as the Thirteenth Doctor in 2018 and is the first woman to be cast as the character.

1960s Britain

1961- First man in space

1963- American President J.F. Kennedy assassinated

1963- Martin Luther King gives his "I have a dream" speech

1964- Beatlemania takes over America

1965- The introduction of the mini skirt in a fashion show

1966- England wins the football world cup

1968- Martin Luther King assassinated

1969- First Man on the moon

1969- Concorde is flown for the first time

The 'hippy' sixties as they are often called, had a shift in culture. There was more freedom for young people and a breakaway from traditions.

Episode analysis: An Unearthly Child

An Unearthly Child (sometimes referred to as 100,000 BC) is the first narrative arc in the British science fiction television series Doctor Who. It was first broadcast on BBC TV in four weekly parts from 23 November to 14 December 1963. Scripted by the Australian writer Anthony Coburn, it introduces William Hartnell as the First Doctor and original companions; Carole Ann Ford as the Doctor's granddaughter Susan Foreman, with Jacqueline Hill and William Russell as school teachers Barbara Wright and Ian Chesterton. The first episode deals with Ian and Barbara's discovery of the Doctor and his time-space ship TARDIS in a junkyard in contemporary London.

Plot of episode 1

Schoolteachers Ian Chesterton and Barbara Wright are concerned about one of their pupils, Susan Foreman, who seems to have a very 'alien' outlook on England. They have come to her listed address to investigate. They arrive in a junkyard and find a police box, which proves to be no ordinary police box. When Ian and Barbara enter, they discover it to be much bigger on the inside than the outside. In the TARDIS is Susan and her grandfather, the Doctor. Fearing that Barbara and Ian will give away the secret of the TARDIS, he kidnaps them and takes the machine to the Stone Age, where they will have to fight for their lives.

The First Doctor was played as less mischievous and more cruel than later incarnations. He also seems less concerned about saving the human race.

His companion was made his 'granddaughter' because it was thought inappropriate for an old man to be accompanied by a young girl if she were unrelated to him.

Representations

Daniel Chandler's representation theory: CAGE

This is a theory about how the media constructs or represents individuals or groups of people through the media. Key markers of identity can be remembered through the acronym CAGE:

- C- Class
- A- Age
- G- Gender
- E- Ethnicity

Characters and representation in An Unearthly Child

Susan Foreman

Susan Foreman is the first of a long-standing tradition of Doctor Who companions. It was felt improper in 1963 for an older man, such as the Doctor, to be travelling through space with a young 15 year old girl; so she was written as his Granddaughter. She is a strong link to the young target audience and will often react in ways that the audience might in future episodes [e.g. screaming at aliens]. Classically relatable.

She also provides a link between the chaotic alien madness of the Doctor and the human confusion embodied by Barbara and Ian (and the audience). She is therefore a translator of the more Sci-Fi elements of the story to a naïve 1960s audience. She can often be seen explaining some of the Doctor's stranger outbursts to the humans Barbara and Ian. Another example of exposition.

The Doctor

The Doctor represents the new age of technology and science that was emerging in the 1960s. The 'space race' was underway and the world was fascinated with all things space travel and linked to other planets. He represents this new world of discovery.

He is a Time Lord from the planet Gallifrey and he explores the universe with usually human companions who serve as audience surrogate characters to ask questions which allow the Doctor to provide relevant exposition. He is often eccentric, distracted and dark in mood. Some commentators have said he symbolises the struggle between good and evil, some have said he is a symbol of a God-like presence who wanders through time and space trying to change history for the better.

Teachers Barbara Wright and Ian Chesterton

Barbara and Ian represent traditional human values and are classically middle class. They are the people the Doctor explains everything to, so that the audience understands as well. This is known as exposition.

They are also Science and History teachers so often offer advice and opinions to the Doctor on matters of space and time. They also have very clearly defined gender roles in the series.

Barbara and Ian also play the narrative role of mother and father to Susan who is very naive and who has not had that paternal guidance from the Doctor. They are very traditional in their gender roles. Ian is very physical when there is fighting or physical work to be done. Barbara is represented in a more homely, caring role in the series. These were stereotypical gender roles in the early 60s - but times were changing. Ian and Barbara are bonded by their human characteristics in their Space adventures. They represent the caring, empathetic part of the human condition in how they look after Susan and, in later episodes, the Doctor himself.

Audience

General audience notes:

- Mainstream - broad appeal as millions of people watch the BBC
- Long-running which shows it appeals to masses (12-40) and the reboot helped gain younger fans.
- 12 certificate so maybe young teens
- References to popular culture (pop culture) has meant an appeal to a wider age range.
- Demographics: A-E class as some complex plot points but also action and SFX that are easy to understand
- Gender- split down middle (although boys are more usually fans of science fiction, this has changed over time. Also introduction of romance and drama in narrative. From 1970-2010 the female audience grew by 22%.
- More diverse representation over recent years (gay characters, black central characters, strong female characters and of course the new female doctor) have all encouraged a wider audience.

Industries

Importance of Doctor Who to BBC

Doctor Who is one of the most iconic franchises that the BBC has. It has been launched all over the world through BBC Worldwide and generates huge income for the BBC.

In 2014, a BBC Worldwide Report stated Sherlock and Doctor Who as the BBC's biggest exports of the past year. The worldwide simulcast (simultaneous transmission) of "The Day of the Doctor" in 2013 saw this episode air at the same time in 98 countries on six continents.

BBC: Industry notes

The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) is a public service organisation and the oldest national broadcaster and the biggest in terms of employees [over 20,000]. It is different from other TV broadcasters in that funding comes from us all as BBC licence fee payers whereas other channels rely on advertising and sponsorship. The BBC has 3 key purposes: To Inform, Educate & Entertain. This means:

- To provide information (that is supposed to be balanced)
- To support learning for people of all ages
- To produce creative output
- To have diverse content (such as with its representations)
- To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world

BBC regulation

The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) has a board of governing members and is independent of government intervention. This means that it can produce content free impartially.

Since 2017, The BBC is now regulated by OfCOM (the Office of Communications). OfCOM oversees all media channels and produces a code of conduct that all media channels must follow or have their licence to make content removed and/or be fined heavily.

This includes suitable programmes before the 9pm watershed and various other quality standards.

Class: An introduction

Class is a spin-off series from Doctor Who and was shown on BBC3 and iPlayer in 2016.

The story focuses on five of the students and staff at Coal Hill Academy (which is the same school featured in Episode 1: An Unearthly Child - an example of intertextuality) who are tasked by the Doctor to deal with alien threats while trying to deal with their personal lives.

Class is aimed specifically at a young adult audience and contains sexual content, violence and language above the level allowed on the parent series.

The premise of series one is that some characters are the last survivors of an alien war (with the Shadow Kin) and are hiding on Earth after being rescued by the Doctor. The Doctor appoints Miss Quill and the pupils as protectors of the school, noting that it has become a beacon throughout space-time. Until that moment a normal student, April is left sharing a heart with the Shadow Kin king, Corakinus, after a short fight in the first episode.

The narrative structure in each episode and across the series is built using a multi-strand narrative which means that there are a range of plots building across each episode and narrative arcs which span the whole series.

Characters

Charlie Smith, an alien posing as a human student. He is the gay prince of the Rhodians, and the last of his species.

Ram Singh, a tough, antisocial student and gifted football player. Lost his leg in a fight with Corakinus on S1 Ep1. Key episode Ep2.

April MacLean, an ordinary, unremarkable student whose life is forever changed when she encounters the king of the Shadow Kin, Corakinus. She shares a heart with him in Ep1 [which is key to understanding Ep4].

Andrea Quill, real name Andra'ath, the physics teacher at Coal Hill Academy. Like Charlie, she is secretly an alien and the last of her species, the Quill, long-time war enemies of the Rhodians.

Tanya Adeola, a child prodigy of Nigerian origin who moved up three years at due to her cleverness. Key episode Ep3

Corakinus, the evil king of the Shadow Kin. Shares a heart with April. Travels through time/space tear at Coal Hill.

Episode 1: For Tonight We Might Die

This is **NOT** the CSP that will come up in the exam but is useful to introduce the characters, setting and main themes of the show. You can watch the episode (and the rest of the series) on the [BBC3 Class episodes page](#).

Class: Co-owner of a Lonely Heart

Episode analysis

Watch episode 4 again - Co-owner of a Lonely Heart. You can watch the episode (and the rest of the series) on the [BBC3 Class episodes page](#).

Focus on your notes from class (or make your own notes) based around NCIS.

Narrative: multi-strand narrative

There are a number of narrative strands running through this episode. They include:

- April's story
- Corakinus's story
- New Headteacher at Coal Hill Academy
- Flower petal invasion/danger

Audience

Unlike Doctor Who and more in line with Torchwood before it (which also debuted on BBC3), Class is aimed specifically at a young adult audience and contains sexual content, violence and language above the level allowed in Doctor Who.

It was broadcast initially on BBC Three (online only) to poor audience figures and later broadcast on BBC One between 10.45pm and 11.15pm slots.

When the programme was on BBC One it was aired at 11.30pm had an audience of 0.28 million, a share of 5.1% of total TV audience. Around 250,000 have accessed the episode on iPlayer

Target audience

- Some mainstream appeal as it is linked to the 'Whoniverse' (Doctor Who universe) but too niche perhaps for a mass audience?
- The show tried to appeal to young adult audience by including sexual scenes, more violence and more daring representations. Why was this not effective?
- 15 certificate: 'strong bloody violence, gory images, injury detail'
- References to popular culture (pop culture) has meant an appeal to a wider age range.
- Demographics: A-E class as some complex plot points but also action and SFX that are easy to understand
- More diverse representation regarding gender, race and sexuality.

Fans - the 'Whoniverse' reaction

Watch this fan reaction video on Co-owner of a Lonely Heart from the Doctor Who YouTube channel:

Representations

Diversity in Class

Much has been made of the diverse casting for Class, as well as the LGBT lead which was touted by the BBC prior to Class' release. Do you think these representations and narratives are executed well?

RACE & CLASS: The actors are from a range of ethnic and social class backgrounds, and it seems as though more may be to come about that in future episodes, since the premiere seemed to hint at some difficulties between Ram and his father.

SEXUALITY: The homosexual kiss that Charlie shares with his date is normalised due to his role as an alien who only follows feelings and has no preconceptions of sexuality.

GENDER: Tanya (a member of the BAME community) and April have intelligence and an academic prowess that they're rightfully proud of, and Ram has emotions that he's not afraid to show or speak about. Miss Quill is presented as an unemotional leader. These facts show that Class is trying to break barriers and subvert previous media stereotypes.

DISABILITY: April has a mother who is disabled and their relationship is explored.

AGE: The Doctor and Miss Quill are both powerful, older characters and the young characters are seen displaying maturity and making tough decisions. On the other hand, some characters (e.g. Tanya's Mum) reinforce stereotypes of the strict parent and some aspects of the main characters also reinforce teen stereotypes.

Industries

Class failed to make an impact for the BBC, with some mixed reviews and poor viewing figures. Class failed to make the BBC iPlayer Top 20 in its first seven weeks, and failed to secure over 1m viewers at any point when repeated on BBC One. This was for a number of reasons:

- iPlayer release only initially.
- BBC One late showing (after 10.30 slots). Poor scheduling.
- The show was axed after one series. Why was this?
- No-one - not even the BBC - seemed entirely sure who the show was for. A teen-oriented drama with adult themes, spun off from a series intended (primarily) for children, the tone of Class was confused.
- Creator Patrick Ness was baffled by the decision to air the series in double-bills, late at night, more than two months after its BBC Three debut.
- It sorely lacked a big selling point. Clearly, spinning itself off from Doctor Who was not enough to guarantee success.

Class distribution

Media distribution is a term for the way the product reaches audiences. In the case of Class it was originally distributed (shown) online only on BBC Three. It was then shown weeks later in a late night slot “the graveyard slot” on BBC One.

It was also shown on BBC America where it was slightly more popular. In America, the episodes were paired with Doctor Who episodes to create a ‘Whoinverse’ double bill.

Overall, the confused distribution model was almost certainly part of its downfall.

Class marketing and promotion

As Class was aimed at an older audience, there was a clear shift in the way it was marketed from traditional Doctor Who episodes (on a Saturday early evening slot).

Online marketing: Strong web presence. Highly interactive. Lots of video clips, interviews, fan art and fiction. Trying to build brand loyalty BUT criticised for not making more of its link to Doctor Who.

Search the internet to watch Class trailers.

BBC3 focus

What is BBC Three and how does it fit into the profile of the BBC remit?

BBC Three launched as a TV channel in 2003 and its remit was to provide “innovative” programming to a target audience of viewers between 16 and 34 years old:

“The remit of BBC Three is to bring younger audiences to high quality public service broadcasting through a mixed-genre schedule of innovative UK content featuring new UK talent. The channel should use the full range of digital platforms to deliver its content and to build an interactive relationship with its audience. The channel's target audience is 16-34-year-olds.”

Until February 2016, BBC Three aired as a freeview TV channel. However, as a result of planned £100 million budget cut across the BBC, it was proposed that BBC Three be discontinued as a television service, and be converted to **online only**. The BBC recognised that younger people may watch TV at different times, on

different devices using different services (iPlayer, YouTube, Netflix, etc) due to the rise of streaming and on-demand services.

BBC3's content budget was slashed from £85m to £30m, with around £10m now spent on comedy, £10m on serious factual, £3m for drama and the rest on new types of content, such as short-form YouTube videos.

Why the change? There were changes to its audience's viewing habits. Less than 50% of the video consumed by 16-24 year olds is now via 'live' TV (back in 2003 it was 100%), while over 90% of them now own a smartphone and have at least one social media account.

BBC: Industry notes reminder

The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) is a public service organisation and the oldest national broadcaster and the biggest in terms of employees [over 20,000]. It is different from other TV broadcasters in that funding comes from us all as BBC licence fee payers whereas other channels rely on advertising and sponsorship. The BBC has 3 key purposes: To Inform, Educate & Entertain. This means:

- To provide information (that is supposed to be balanced)
- To support learning for people of all ages
- To produce creative output
- To have diverse content (such as with its representations)
- To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world

Where does Class fit into these objectives and the BBC mission statement?

BBC regulation reminder

The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) has a board of governing members and is independent of government intervention. This means that it can produce content free impartially.

Since 2017, The BBC is now regulated by OfCOM (the Office of Communications). OfCOM oversees all media channels and produces a code of conduct that all media channels must follow or have their licence to make content removed and/or be fined heavily.

This includes suitable programmes before the 9pm watershed and various other quality standards.