Plagiarism Exercise

1. Read source texts A and B to get an impression of the source information. Make notes on a separate piece of paper if you wish.

2. Then look at the student texts 1-5. Do the following:
   - read the text
   - decide whether it is guilty of plagiarism
   - identify exactly what is wrong (or right)
   - think of ways to correct the problem
   - write your responses in the gaps provided underneath each text.

---

Source A

The enthusiasm for social realism on television led to the creation of Coronation Street (ITV, 1960-), ITV’s most successful series ever. It is a serial drama or ‘soap opera’ (the term was imported from America where such programmes were sponsored by detergent manufacturers) and was created by Tony Warren, when he was only 23. It deals with the daily lives of working-class folk and ‘petty’ bourgeoisie in a short, grey, narrow street in the imaginary northern town of Weatherfield, close to Manchester.

When it first appeared, a programme featuring the daily lives of ordinary folk had never been seen on television before and some critics doubted it would be successful. Earlier series such as The Grove Family featured middle-class southerners with RP accents, and at first the public was shocked by the northerners’ rough speech and manners. Early episodes resembled the dramatic realism of Armchair Theatre and The Wednesday Play, but they have gradually evolved into a lively series with moments of humour, tragedy, surprise and farce.

Although Ken Barlow (played by Bill Roach) is the only remaining member of the original cast, the characters have changed relatively little over the years. The dominant personalities tend to be female and stories are told with humour, pace and the occasional moral lesson. The programme has a wide range of fans. Since the mid-1960s each episode has been regularly seen by an audience of 15-20 million of all ages in all parts of the country. In the late 1990s it continues to be the most popular programme on British television, watched and referred to by almost everyone.


---

Source B

The ITV serial Coronation Street began in 1960 and was not a critical success. It was only expected to run for a few weeks. However it caught the imagination of viewers, not least because of its location in the North of England, which was becoming a highly visible centre of 1960s Britain, from the ‘kitchen-sink’ dramas of the BBC’s ‘Play for Today’ to the rise of the Beatles, from nearby Liverpool. Like kitchen-sink dramas, it focused on the plight of ‘ordinary folk’, often making use of Northern English language and dialect. Terms like ‘eh, chuck’, ‘nowt’ and others became widely heard.

The storyline focus on the experiences of families, their inter-reaction and of relationships between people of different ages, classes and social structures. In some ways Coronation Street has charted the changes in public attitudes towards religion, politics, community, family breakdown, the gentrification of working class areas etc. For example, in the first decade one of the central social points on the street was the Glad Tidings Mission Hall, where religious services were held and social contacts, parties, etc took place. By the start of the twenty-first century, no religious ‘set’ exists, with the only religious resident on the street being the 70 year old widow, Emily Bishop. Religion if it features at all, is mentioned in weddings and funerals, though here too, matching contemporary society, registry office weddings and non-religious funerals are increasingly common.

Of the original cast on the show, only one character remains, Ken Barlow, played by William Roache. Barlow entered the storyline as the young radical son of a large family, epitomising the youth of 1960s Britain, where figures like the Beatles, the model Twiggy, the Rolling Stones and The Who were reshaping the concept of youthful rebellion. Through the rest of the family were killed off or moved, Ken Barlow has remained the constant link throughout forty years of Coronation Street. He has been a teacher, a newspaper editor, a community activist and most bizarrely of all a trolley-pusher at a supermarket, before returning to teaching and writing. He has been married three times, widowed once, divorced twice, and had twenty-seven girlfriends, including a character played by the now famous actress Joanna Lumley. He had four children during the street's existence; a daughter (Susan) killed in an accident, a son (Peter) who returned to live on the street (and was once played by the actor's own son) but has since departed again (after bigamously marrying two women), a son who lives with Ken's ex-girlfriend, and his adopted daughter, Tracy (again a street returnee, played by a fourth actress to have the role!), who was his third wife's daughter by her ex-husband, Ray Langton.

The programme is now aired four evenings a week on British television, on Mondays (sometimes twice), Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Its main and much younger rival, EastEnders is broadcast three times a week on the BBC (at times that are carefully scheduled to avoid clashing with it). Though no longer as watched as it was in the 1980s (when more people watched 'Ken Barlow' marry Deirdre Langton) than watched Prince Charles marry Lady Diana Spencer, i.e., more than 24 million) it still remains ITV's most watched programme, with audiences in excess of 10 million. Its Christmas Day episode remains as central to many viewers' Christmas Day celebration as the 'Queen's Speech'.

It was the enthusiasm for social realism that led to the creation of Coronation Street. When it first appeared, a programme featuring the daily lives of ordinary folk had never been seen on television before and some critics doubted it would be successful. However, series such as The Grove Family had prepared audiences for the northerners' rough speech and manners. Coronation Street caught the imagination of viewers, and led to terms like 'eh, chuck', 'nowt' and others becoming widely heard.

In some ways Coronation Street has charted the changes in public attitudes towards religion, politics, community, family breakdown, the gentrification of working class areas etc. It focuses on the experiences of families, their inter-reaction and on relationships between people of different ages, classes and social structures. Many viewers are attracted by the liveliness of the series, and the way it contains moments of humour, tragedy, surprise and farce.

Coronation Street continues to be the most popular programme on British television, watched and referred to by almost everyone. It is no longer as watched as it was in the 1980s (when more people watched Ken Barlow marry Deirdre Langton than watched Prince Charles marry Lady Diana Spencer), but it still attracts an audience of 15-20 million of all ages in all parts of the country. Its Christmas day episode is as central to many viewers' Christmas day celebration as the 'Queen's Speech'.

According to the entry on Coronation Street in Wikipedia, the TV series was originally only expected to run for a few weeks. However, it caught the imagination of viewers, thanks to its location in the North of England, and its focus on the plight of 'ordinary folk'. It is now most watched programme, with audiences in excess of 10 million.

Christopher (1999) has claimed that Coronation Street is “ITV’s most successful series ever” (p. 23), despite initial doubts on the part of critics that the programme would be successful. These doubts, he elaborates, were due to the fact that previous series, such as The Grove Family, featured conventional southern families, rather than unashamedly northern manners and accents.

Yet, as the entry in Wikipedia highlights, what was first found unconventional, is that to say, the programme’s northern subject matter, was ultimately one of the factors that contributed to the series’ success. The author argues that it was precisely the focus on the “plight of ‘ordinary folk’” that attracted viewers. The programme has in fact, he adds, functioned as a kind of mirror to society, reflecting social changes and problems over 4 decades.

Christopher states that the appearance of the programme was caused by general enthusiasm among the public for social realism (p. 22). He links this quality to the dramatic realism of theatre plays such as Armchair Theatre and The Wednesday Play and highlights the programme’s capacity to shock audiences when it was first shown. Yet, as the Wikipedia entry explains, this was also in part due to the appearance of Northern dialect on national television for the first time. Christopher also cites the viewing figures, which remain impressive at between 15-20 million viewers of all ages and from all over Britain.

Christopher attributes the conception of the ITV soap opera (a term imported from America where detergent manufacturers generally sponsored such programmes) to a general “enthusiasm for social realism” in the 1960s (p. 22). He goes on to describe the subject matter of the series: the day-to-day lives of working-class and lower-middle-class characters in their Manchester suburb.

Both Christopher and the author of the Wikipedia entry highlight that the series met with a less than enthusiastic reaction among critics when it first appeared. Christopher states, by way of explanation, that previous series had tended to feature “middle-class southerners with RP accents”, which contrasted sharply with Coronation Street’s characters with their unashamedly northern dialects and manners (p. 23). Yet the entry in Wikipedia highlights that what was first found unconventional, is that to say, the programme’s northern subject matter, was ultimately one of the factors that contributed to the series’ success. The author relates the popularity of the programme precisely to its northern location, as this part of the country was enjoying an increasingly high profile as a cultural centre at the time.

Christopher describes the way in which, following early episodes that resembled examples of the dramatic realism that was common in theatre play at the time, Coronation Street has developed into an entertaining series, combining “moments of humour, tragedy, surprise and farce” (p. 23). Indeed, as the author of the Wikipedia entry suggests, the programme has functioned as a kind of mirror to society, reflecting social changes and problems over 4 decades (the religious content is described by way of example here) Perhaps a slightly less realistic aspect of the programme, which both Christopher and the author of the Wikipedia entry outline in some detail, is its longest-running character: Ken Barlow. Ken has the kind of biography that only exists in soap operas, having been married 3 times and had a range of professions including teacher community activist and a trolley-pusher at a supermarket!

Yet he evidently has some appeal for viewers: the Wikipedia entry cited the statistic that 24 million people tuned in to watch Barlow marry Deirdre Langton, more than watched Prince Charles marry Lady Diana Spencer.

Christopher places regular viewing figures for Coronation Street at an impressive 15-20 million (p. 23). According to the Wikipedia entry, the programme “remains ITV’s most watched programme […] its Christmas Day episode remains as central to many viewers’ Christmas Day celebration as the ‘Queen’s Speech’.”

Finally, Ken Barlow is mentioned as the longest-running character, and some of his many professions in the programme are listed.