

Explain what the message/representation is?

I have looked at the way families are shown in sitcoms and what I have realized is that family is more than blood relatives – that basically means that anyone can have a family, you don't have to be blood related or marriage related to become a family. Family is a lot more than a relative or marriage: you don't need proof on a piece of paper to prove that you are in a certain family. Family means to feel safe and accepted but also loved by the people around you and just to be there for each other through the thick and thin no matter what. This type of message is portrayed in the TV shows *The Simpsons*, *Trophy wife* and *Modern Family* but each in their own way

1

Explain how the representation is shown with 'dialogue' and 'actions'

The message of "family is more than blood relatives" is represented in the television programmes, *The Simpsons*, *Modern Family* and *Trophy Wife*. Throughout the episodes the message is shown really well through the features of 'dialogue' and 'actions' of the characters.

In the comedy series *Modern Family*, which successfully aired September 23rd in 2011, the message is really strongly represented. In *Modern Family*, the main characters are all related in some way and connected in some way. Firstly there is the Dunphy family which is made up of Phil (dad), Claire (mum), Luke (youngest child), Alex (middle child), and Hayley (the oldest sibling). Then there is Cameron and Mitchell (lovers). Mitchell is Claire's younger brother. Lastly there is Jay, Gloria and Manni (Gloria's son). Jay is Claire and Mitchell's father. The key message is mostly shown in the two main families. The Pritchett family (Cameron and Mitchell) shows this between Gloria's son Manni and Gloria's recent husband Jay. They may not have any blood relations and they may seem like they completely hate each other but they really do care about each other and Manni really looks up to Jay as a father figure because his father isn't really around "90% of being a good father is showing up," says Manni about his own father.

2

The feature of dialogue is used to show the messages relation with Manni and Jay when Jay says to Manni. "What do you suggest?" and Jay answers "I usually go with earrings." This dialogue shows that Jay doesn't really take Manni seriously and always jokes around with him. This key message is also shown with Mitch and Cameron's relationship and their newly adopted baby Lily. Even though Lily is not their biological daughter, it doesn't mean that they treat her any differently; they treat her like she is their own. The whole family put together also shows the message through their actions because although Cameron, Gloria and Manni aren't fully related to all the other they don't get treated any differently to how the others are treated and treat each other. They are all just one big family and they all love each other equally.

The key message "family is more than blood relatives" is also shown strongly in the program *The Simpsons*. Although Ned's family isn't related to *The Simpson's* family in any way at all, he still acts as a father figure towards Bart. Ned can see that on the inside Bart is longing for him and his father to have a more loving relationship and even though Bart is too proud to admit it, it really affects him and Ned can see that. Ned's character portrays this message a lot because even though he has his own children, he still makes an effort to make Bart feel loved and welcome into his home by taking him fishing and just little things like making him a

hot cocoa drink which is really something that Bart is surprised about because Homer would never do something like that. Ned's dialogue also portrays this message just with the simplest words like "how was your day Bart?" or "Hi Bart how are you?" because it shows that someone cares about him. The Simpsons representation of the key message is quite different to Modern Family, because in Modern Family they have been brought together by marriage, whereas The Simpson's representation is that anyone can love you as their own family no matter if you are related through blood, marriage or nothing.

Trophy Wife

Then there's the television program Trophy Wife which is a new comedy to TV2. The program Trophy Wife also shows a different way of how the key message "family is more than blood relatives" is portrayed on TV. They portray the message through the relationship with Kate Harrison and her 3 step children. Kate, who is married to Pete, has made a commitment to not only her husband but also to his three children that he has from two previous marriages. For a step parent it can really hard to make a connection with their partner's children and it does take a lot of effort in some cases. Kate's character made a lot of effort to make a relationship with her three step kids. For example for Halloween Kate helped Bert (Pete's youngest child) to get a costume for him, this allowed them to have a bit of bonding time together. This program just shows that being marriage related doesn't mean that you're not family, because you are and you can love your step children just as much as you can love your real children.

Explain the effect of the representation:

The key message "family is more than blood relatives" has the potential to have a really positive effect on society because a lot of people in our society these days copy what is said or done on television programs and begin to believe that whatever they say or do is always correct and true. This positive effect is a good thing because it allows families (whether they are blood related, marriage related or not even related at all) that you don't have to have proof that you are a family because anyone can be a part of anyone's family and it is important because families have changed in real life. The consequence of the key message "family is more than blood relatives" is nothing. I don't believe that his message has any bad consequences because it's utterly completely true and I don't see how anything bad can come of it. The relationship with the society with the key message "family is more than blood relatives is huge" because family is a huge thing. It's in our everyday lives and without some sort of family there to support you, live would be pretty tough. These three programmes, The Simpsons, Modern Family and Trophy Wife are all texts that I chose because they all show the same key message but it is portrayed a little differently in each program. But in the end family is family no matter what and you don't have to be related at all to be a part of a family. Your family is who you make it.