

91251



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

2

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## Level 2 Media Studies, 2014

### 91251 Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre

9.30 am Thursday 20 November 2014  
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre.	Demonstrate in-depth understanding of an aspect of a media genre.	Demonstrate critical understanding of an aspect of a media genre.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**You should write an essay on ONE statement in this booklet.**

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

**Excellence**

**TOTAL** **8**

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The suggested maximum for your essay is 800 words (6–7 pages). The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay.

Support your discussion with **detail** from at least TWO media texts and any other relevant sources.

Begin your essay here:

We can all agree that the genres we love today haven't always been that way. In order to adapt to ~~or a~~ ~~changing audience~~, societal values consistently create interest genres have to adapt to survive. A genre that has shown considerable change and popularity is the centralized vampire television drama. Over the years our depiction of the prodigious vampire has changed from blood sucking monster to teen heart throb.

Vampires were first introduced to ~~the~~ the silver screen before they appeared on television <sup>Horror</sup> Films such as Nosferatu and Bela Lugosi Dracula represent the vampire as a heartless killer, disguised as a charmingly count. These depictions are the origins of the many stereotypical ~~was~~ characteristics we associate with vampires today. The widows peak, slicked back hair, wide collared cloak and bejewelled ~~septor~~. ~~Septor~~. ~~Horror~~ However when vampires hit the television they needed to be toned down as there are no age restrictions on television. The ~~first~~ one of the first television vampires is Barnabas Collins from the hit television show Dark Shadows 1966. Although Barnabas retains the

physical appearance of the original vampires with his coats, apparel and chain, Barnabas is considerably modified in his mentality. Unlike other vampires Barnabas is sympathetic and humanlike. Barnabas is said to ~~not~~ unlike his original coverts doesn't rebel in his vampire nature, <sup>reluctant to feed</sup> or embrace ~~that~~ be the monster he is. This is shown in episode 212 where Barnabas comes to a portrait of his former lover Josette "Where ~~was~~ were you when I was turned into something even my own father loathed." This tells us that Barnabas is unhappy with his condition. "loathed" is such a strong word and the "even" emphasises ~~the~~ how we expect unconditional love from our parents. Barnabas thus makes us sympathise with Barnabas because we too are constantly looking to receive our parents' praise and can relate to his torment. This shows the beginnings of a change in how we see vampires. Before we were prepared to stake vampires in the heart but the sympathy we feel for Barnabas prevents us from doing so. We see Barnabas a more human than other vampires and feel sympathy towards him. ~~But~~ Barnabas also feels emotions like humans which draws us to him on another level. Previously vampires were seen as cold blooded killers thirsty for only blood. Barnabas breaks the mold actually falls in love with multiple characters on the show. An example of his longing for love is in episode

302 where Barnabus says he can "bring Vicki the kind of love Burke Perkins never could". This dialogue shows that Barnabus is rich in jealousy and love; two very human emotions. The inconceivable idea that a vampire can love is surpassed by the notion that his love will exceed that of Vicki's fiancée, a human! These emotions we share with Barnabus make him sympathetic and his other def convention defying characteristics like ~~being~~ seeking a cure for vampirism and being reluctant to feed only emphasizes this feeling further.

Buffy The Vampire Slayer 1997 takes the idea of a sympathetic vampire to a new level with creator Joss Whedon's character Angel. Angel is the main vampire in Buffy and unlike the others on the show he is cursed with a soul. This means that he ~~can~~ feels emotions unlike vampires would normally. Effectively this makes him conscious of his actions and he no longer acts recklessly or voluntarily. This also means he feels pain and regret for the actions ~~he took~~ he took before his soul. In the episode "surprise" Angel says to Buffy "You have no idea what its like to have done the things I've done, and to care". This shows the extent of Angel's suffering as like humans he must learn

to live with his actions. This creates sympathy for ~~an~~ Angel as we feel the pain he has and relate to the ideas of remorse that we often don't see in vampires. As well as growth on the cultural representation of the vampire, Angel is also a lot different in appearance to older vampires such as Barnabas Collins. Angel unlike vampires of yore has ditched the "count Dracula" cape and widows peak and opted for a more natural t-shirt and jeans. Not only does this normalized Angel, as he fits in with humans but it also makes him acceptable poster material. Where ~~vampires like Dracula and even~~ ~~people~~ ~~buy~~ a sympathetic vampire, Barnabas Collins isn't exactly the person we expect to post on our rooms with; whereas Angel is a younger and far more normal looking vampire who is heavily marketed at younger viewers. ~~We can see in Angel how through his~~ ~~Angel's~~ look and his intimate relationship with Buffy we can see ~~how Angel is a step closer to~~ the change ~~progression~~ in the representation of vampires in TV commercialized vampire dramas.

~~in the case of~~  
2009 vampire dramas took 'Buffy's sympathetic 'Angel' and created an even more sympathetic and relatable vampire. Vampires in vampire dramas are completely detached from cinematic vampires. Although Barnabas - Angel ~~has~~ appeared extremely sympathetic they still

Maintained ~~identity~~ identifiable tropes and characteristics from cinema vampires. Barnabas was the appeared of a count Dracula and Angel was still bound by weaknesses such as sunlight and the power of the church with the him to the demonic vampires of Old. Stefan and Damon from Vampire Diaries sever those ties and resemble nothing of an old vampire. They dress as normal teens and can even walk ~~time~~ be exposed to sunlight through their wings. In episode 4.02 Damon pokes fun at the old vampire weakness of the cross by say "I don't know why but that always makes me smile" when crossing himself in church. This clearly shows how the representation of vampires has changed in Commercialised Vampire Drama. No longer are vampires associated with the demonic creatures of old. ~~The~~ What this does is make the vampires on Vampire Diaries ethnically sympathetic and normal which makes us like them and see them as the heroes of the show. This idea could not be sold if we still viewed vampires as demons and blood sucking killers. Vampires in Vampire Diaries are not only emotional like Barnabas and Angel have grown to be but have an increased sense of feeling that surpasses everyday humans in Mystic Falls. This is explained in the episode called

"turning point" where Elana becomes a vampire. Stephan explains that "Everything you like before will be magnified now" which makes vampirism a desirable condition where people like Elana want to become Vampires and live forever with magnified heightend emotions and super human abilities like strength and speed. This directly contrast to Barnabas who actively seeks a cure and hates being a vampire. This shows how vampires have changed from a monster that we prey on us and is demonic to a person with super human abilities like our fantasy super heroes. Long gone are the struggles and characteristics of old vampires and in with the vampires we love and aspire to be like. The representation of vampires and views towards them have completely changed.

Why? Why are we suddenly wanting to sleep with the very same monsters that kept us awake at night? Producers of television dramas have slowly changed the way vampires are represented because it's more marketable. For a long time the only place for vampires was the horror flick genre where only adults could see them. But in order to maximize the potential vampire audience vampires needed to be on TV. However in order to be broadcasted on television a significant change needed

to occur to the representation to the vampire.

Vampires needed to be sympathetic and appeal to the audience otherwise they would be deemed too scary and be banned from TV.

This is when we see Barnabas Collins on Dark

Shadows. An identifiably vampire character

with personality adjustments. Dark Shadows

aired at a 4pm after school slot and therefore

needed to be age appropriate. Once Barnabas

was introduced to the show, Dark Shadows dominated

the after school time slot proving <sup>Barnabas</sup> to be a very

popular asset to the show. Producers like Joe

Whedon saw this and rode on its success

with Buffy The Vampire Slayer a show that

covertly discussed teen problems ~~about~~ the like

virginity, graduation and coming out. Suddenly heaps

of new vampire shows are emerging where

blood lies which captured the CSI audience

By sympathising and normalising the vampire

character shows have able to open the market up

to vampires and target far more audiences

than before. Even Disney aired the show

"My baby sits a vampire" targeted at

children. This ability was enabled because

we no longer fear vampires as their

representation has changed to something we

aspire to be. When vampires started the

audience was a minute horror adult



Extra space if required.

Write the question number(s) if applicable.

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QUESTION  
NUMBER

audience but now the potential viewers ~~are~~  
are enormous.

An implication ~~of this~~ of expanding  
the audience is the enormous revenues  
that comes from home interest. Shows ~~are~~  
have a phenomenal following and these people  
(promerently teens) are spending an incredible  
amount of money on the genre. ~~The~~ ~~Am~~  
estimated \$100 Billion is spent by teens using  
their own and their parents money. This is  
an ~~the~~ enormous sum that the TV ~~and~~ the  
drama genre is capitalising on. Shows such  
as Vampire Diaries are immensely popular and  
the Nielson ratings' claim a 173% increase  
in popularity since the shows start. Not only  
the profit from the programs but merchandising  
has had extremely huge margins with products  
like T-shirts, posters and coffee mugs being  
sold for having Vampire sympathetic vampires  
on them. Spin offs series for both Vampire  
characters ("The originals") and Buffy ("Angel")  
couldn't even have money for the genre.  
By ~~open~~ ~~expanded~~ exposing vampires to a  
wider audience, the genre has incurred enormous  
profits because of the change. Sympathising

Extra space if required.  
Write the question number(s) if applicable.

QUESTION  
NUMBER

normalising and humanising the vampire have  
not only kept the genre alive but have  
earned it an enormous renaissance.

This candidate was awarded 08  
The essay consistently examines the implications of the change and draws  
conclusions backed up with specific detailed evidence.

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