

Activity sheet 10: narrative structures

Identify which narrative structure is being used in each of the following media texts.

Narrative structure(s):
A film set in what appears to be a normal town until a group of friends start being killed off one by one. Both the characters and the audience have to guess who will be next, how they will die, who will survive, and who the killer is. Finally, the killer will be defeated and one character will have survived.
Narrative structure(s):
A soap opera episode opens with John, who is overcome with emotion as he looks at Fred's apparently lifeless body after an accident in a garage. In a separate location, Sara explains to her friends, Anna and Katy, that she's a bit worried about her son Jake as he's got a temperature. Katy notices a rash on Jake's arm. At the end of the episode, as he is moving Fred's body, John is caught by Simon.
Narrative structure(s):
A film where we learn the story of a man's life over three decades as he tells the tale to a stranger he meets at a bus stop. The narrative makes use of flashbacks and is not told in chronological order.
Narrative structure(s):
When playing a game, a character named Jilna invites you for a night out. You do not need to go but you agree as you hope she'll help you later in the game when you need backup. Because you have agreed, Jilna gives you information about another character, which changes your planned next steps in the game.
Narrative structure(s):
In a sitcom, Ben and Anwar are flatmates and work colleagues. They are watching a DVD when their co-worker Tara calls round and spoils the ending. She accuses them of being boring so they decide to take up new hobbies. Ben enrolls on a cookery course and Anwar joins a football team. After a series of farcical events, the episode ends with Ben and Anwar sitting on the sofa watching a DVD.
Narrative structure(s):
A detective in a TV drama is attending the wedding of a colleague. When the best man is inexplicably taken ill, the detective has to give the best man's speech. During the speech, he realises that a murderer is present among the guests, has probably poisoned the best man and is intent on killing the groom. The detective saves the groom and arrests the murderer.

Narrative structures	
linear	open
non-linear	closed
circular	single-strand
interactive	multi-strand