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English IV
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Humorist Study **(Analysis/Reflection + Project Proposal)**

The purpose of your Humorist Study is to show that you have found inspirations and models for the kind of Humor Project you want to create. Your analysis of your chosen humorists and your reflection on what you find useful/inspirational about them will serve as the foundation for your project proposal.

Part 1 – The Humorist Analysis and Reflection (2 pages, single-spaced)

An important cornerstone of your Humor project is the study of two professional humorists who have done work that inspires you to make comedy of your own. I encourage you to read/view/listen to multiple works by each humorist, but I suggest you pick one piece per humorist to compare in the sections below. Here's [a student sample](#).

Analysis: In the 1st single-spaced page, compare and contrast their subject matter, themes and styles, using terms from the [Comedy Toolbox](#). Focus your analysis on showing how at least one piece of comedy from each humorist works, and explain how and why they are similar/different.

Two shows which I watch sporadically but never cease to make me laugh are "Somebody Feed Phil" and "Modern Family". "Somebody Feed Phil" is a food documentary show following the travels of Philip Rosenthal, a television writer known for his sitcom works, including "Everybody Loves Raymond." While "Somebody Feed Phil" is not one of his sitcom works, Rosenthal nonetheless incorporates his humor through his witty remarks with the people he meets and his family members. He plays up interactions from his personal life, like teasing his brother Richard (who produces the show). I definitely see humor in the form of banter between Phil and his wife and parents on video-call, and any special guests he invites to share a meal with. Phil even dedicates a section of every episode to straight-up jokes and puns for his father, Max Rosenthal, as homage; Max passes away during the time between the release of the first and last episodes. Phil Rosenthal's humor is tied to a wholesome conclusion in all episodes, where all the people who have helped him are invited to meet one another again at a meal to celebrate their connections.

Similarly, the show "Modern Family" plays up humor from interactions between family members. The show follows banter between each of the three households as well as across the larger family. With the family setup (a gay male couple adopts a baby girl from Vietnam), black humor involving race and sexual orientation creates much of the humor tied in with certain anecdotes and puns. The show is filmed in the manner of each

character's perspective, like individual or group interviews cutting into the narration. This creates humor from situational irony because the audience is aware of each character's intention, yet can do nothing but witness the characters misunderstand one another, leading to hilarious situations. Some sets are staged to be unintentional. Black humor again creates discomfort - a scenario the characters never meant to place themselves in. I know it's a staged show - nothing like real time - but it shows realistic facets of one's life, and I love the show because it is relatable.

Actors in "Modern Family" demonstrate unique humor tactics as well. For example, Eric Stonestreet embodies caricature of physical features and exaggeration of emotion in his role as softie Cameron Tucker. Little Lily Tucker-Pritchett, played by Aubrey Anderson-Emmons, throws in wisecrack lines and sarcastic witty remarks: ex. "cry me a river". Humor devices specific to each actor enable the show to play up each character's unique personality.

Reflection: Then, in another 1-page, single-spaced page, reflect on which subjects/themes and techniques you find most inspirational and valuable in considering *your own* project.

If you were to ask me what humor types fit me the best, I would answer deadpan and dry humor in everyday interactions with my closest friends. (When a badminton friend asked me whether our teammate had gotten a haircut, I answered, "No. His hair shrunk."). I believe these forms of humor are best shared through dialogue or stand-up comedy, so for my humor group project which is neither of these forms, I want to try something different. My group's top idea so far is a music video for a parody. Since we likely won't have dialogue during the song, I would like to try demonstrating ideas through physical expression.

This will be a challenge because while I want to dance and I want to act, I'm usually too embarrassed to try them because I just look like a blundering goose. Well, for this humor project, this should work out for once!

I was thinking we could divide the music video to show each individual member of the group in different scenes, somewhat like the original music video showing the singers posing for a story in different environments. Or we could have all of us together trying to do the dance choreography, which would juxtapose pro dancing (Tae) with blundering dancing. Like *Modern Family*, our project could create humor when our different personalities or abilities interact.

Another key focus of our humor project would be the audio. I believe that 'Cupid' by Fifty Fifty is a really popular song because everyone (listeners) is able to resonate with the theme of experiencing challenges when searching for something or someone you love, whether a romantic partner, career. Often we think of finding a spouse as an all-or-nothing process, that there's only a "Right One" for us, but I appreciate that this song doesn't show that conventional way of thought.

Our challenge in audio will be to create lyrics revolving around a relatable theme to our audience. It could be about something very specific or trivial, where the humor can come from having so much focus on a thing of little significance.

For example, from the original song, being angry at Cupid ("Cupid is so dumb") is funny because it is insignificant - it can't solve any real problems - but it expresses the singer's sentiment and is relatable.

Part 2 – Description of Proposed Project

1.) Are you collaborating with others?

Yes: JanineL (PM student), TaeY, ZoeyB, TheresaM.

2.) Which form of humor are you planning to develop? (See [menu](#).)

Our group is planning to develop a music parody video as our humor project!

3.) What is the subject (or, in the case of satire, the target)? Why did you choose this subject?

Unsure, we would probably write parody lyrics around our subject (anything from school life, to dance, to emotions, to extreme personality performances).

4.) Which comedic [tools/techniques](#) do you plan to use, and why? (List at least 3 main ones and explain briefly how you plan to use them):

- **Blunder - of dancing with vs. without grace, if we go the choreography route.**
- **Parody - of Cupid by Fifty Fifty. It's such a popular song right now (played everywhere and some people haven't tired of it yet) so if we replace the lyrics, hopefully our audience will know where we drew inspiration from.**
- **Caricature - of emotions like each in "Inside Out", or different personalities within a friend group; mainly to play up our differences.**

5.) Why do you think this is the right humor project for you? (If you have a group, can you assure me that everyone is invested in this idea and you won't have trouble getting everyone to contribute meaningfully?) What makes you excited about this idea? What are some potential pitfalls you wish to avoid?

A music video is a fun final project, especially for a group of 5 dynamic people with rich ideas. I want to learn about what makes other members of my group laugh and I'm excited to incorporate everyone's ideas so we all conclude our Freestyle senior year of Freestyle with a blast and a product we find hilarious and will be eager to share.

What (relatable) themes can we incorporate into a music video for a parody of Cupid?

6.) If you get approval, what's your next step?

We would (a) rewrite lyrics, (b) plan what to physically record for the video (Tae filming), (c) get props, (d) sing and create our song, (e) film to the music, (f) compile it in Premiere Pro or After Effects.

 Humor Project! Brainstorming ideas

 The Humor Project Menu (Class document)