

Chatting about a series

Listen to two friends chatting about a television series to practise and improve your listening skills.

Before listening

Do the preparation task first. Then listen to the audio and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the explanations (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. predictable
2. an episode
3. key
4. to reckon
5. special effects
6. revenge
7. destiny
8. to make it

Explanations

- a. like a chapter in a book, but for a television series
- b. easy to guess what will happen
- c. things that will happen in life and you can't change them
- d. very important
- e. to survive
- f. to think; to have an opinion about
- g. hurting someone because they hurt you
- h. computer graphics or other ways of making amazing scenes for film and television

Tasks

Task 1

Match the characters (1–5) with what the speakers say about them (a–e).

Characters

1. The dragon
2. Jaime
3. Bronn
4. Tyrion
5. Cersei

What the speakers say about them

- a. did something that wasn't very surprising.
- b. looked impressive.
- c. is not the woman's favourite character any more.
- d. never does anything we expect.
- e. almost died.

Task 2

Circle the best answer.

1. How often does the woman watch the show?
 - a. always
 - b. sometimes
 - c. We don't know.

2. How has the woman's opinion of the show changed over time?
 - a. It's become more positive.
 - b. It's become less positive.
 - c. It hasn't changed.

3. What does the man think of the story?
 - a. It's very well written.
 - b. Too many characters died.
 - c. He can't remember much about it.

4. What is the one negative thing about the show for the man?
 - a. They spent too much money on the special effects.
 - b. The episodes were too short.
 - c. There weren't enough episodes.

5. Why does the man think the writers have fewer ideas for stories now?
 - a. Because they're saving their ideas to make a Hollywood film.
 - b. Because they aren't copying the books.
 - c. Because they're copying the books.

6. Why does the woman like Cersei?
 - a. The character does unpredictable things.
 - b. The character learns from her mistakes.
 - c. She's a very intelligent character.

Discussion

What series do you think this chat is about? What's your favourite TV show and why?

Transcript

Man: So, did you see the final episode last night?

Woman: Of course! As if I would miss that!

Man: And?

Woman: It was by far the best episode, definitely.

Man: Yeah, totally. The dragon at the end and all the special effects in that final scene were amazing.

Woman: I loved that part! But I still don't think this series was as good as the others.

Man: Really? But you said you wouldn't want to miss it?

Woman: I know, but still ... it's a lot more predictable than it used to be.

Man: But that's because the story has been told so well that all the characters are reaching their destiny now.

Woman: I don't know ... before, anyone could die at any time so it was exciting! But, this series, no key characters died and we all knew they wouldn't. When Jaime fell in the water after the dragon attacked him, we knew he would make it somehow. And ... oh, surprise, Bronn jumps in and saves him.

Man: They did kill some characters in this series, though. What was that one's name ...?

Woman: Exactly, see! You can't even remember who died!

Man: Hmm. The only thing I didn't like about this series was that it was shorter than the others. Seven episodes instead of ten. Maybe they spent all their money on that dragon!

Woman: Right! I don't understand why they did it, as all the fans would happily watch ten episodes.

Man: I reckon that now they're not using the story in the books any more, they don't have as many ideas.

Woman: That would explain why they're not being as brave with the story too. It's more like a Hollywood film than a TV show now.

Man: So, is Tyrion still your favourite character?

Woman: You know ... surprisingly, I think my favourite might be Cersei.

Man: What?!

Woman: She's so interesting! All the awful things she's done and the way she's just aiming for revenge, even though it won't make her happy. She still surprises us because we're expecting her to have a happy ending where she sees her mistakes and becomes a good person. But she never does, no matter what it costs her. She's unpredictable because we just can't believe anyone would be like her.

Man: I guess. You don't have to like a character for them to be your favourite!

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. a
3. d
4. f
5. h
6. g
7. c
8. e

Task 1

1. b
2. e
3. a
4. c
5. d

Task 2

1. a
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. b
6. a