

# Who wants to be a millionaire? essay sample

[Environment](#), [Air](#)



The general role of a game show is to entertain and attract an audience. Prizes are often used as incentives to keep the audience interested. Game shows aim is to sustain audience interest by using various devices to create suspense and tension. This is important to ensure a game show receives high ratings therefore making it highly popular. This shows that the main aim of any game show is to keep audiences anxious in an uncertain state this will then ensure continues viewing. Suspense is where an anxious or uncertain feeling while waiting for something to happen or become known, whereas tension is a feeling of anxiety or nervousness about something that is just about to happen. These emotions work well in general knowledge game shows like ' Who wants to be a Millionaire?' of ' The Weakest Link'. The game show uses a variety of techniques to create the desired effect on the audience. The techniques used in ' Who Want to be a Millionaire?' are lighting, the role of the presenter, the pace of the program and the camera angles.

' Who wants to be a Millionaire?' is promoted as the ' ultimate' game show, with its unique selling point of one million pounds in prize money, which happens to be the biggest sum of money ever to given away on a British television game show.

The image of ' Who wants to be a millionaire?' plays a very important factor in explaining its success. Lighting is used to focus on Tarrent and the contestant and is used to evoke certain sensations in the audience. The positioning and strength of lights act to influence the mood. The lighting will dramatically change during certain point of the game show. The most common change is where the lights descend upon Tarrent the presenter. The

audience is backed out therefore intensifying the pressure that lies upon the contestant answering; this also creates isolation on the two people.

As the contestant attempts to answer the question, the lighting will start form a black background (indicating that the contestant is in a no win situation) and as he answers the question the colours will slowly change to a lighter colour indicating that his attempt to answer the question was correct then the audience are then shown lifting forms of isolation and pressure. This shows that a lot less pressure is on the hopeful contestant. This goes on throughout the whole 'questioning' section. During the show there are wide selections of colour change in lighting, for example during the 'fast finger' round the background colour is purple connoting richness, quality and signifying calmness. As the game progresses the questions become harder and the lighting is completely blacked out on all audience. When a question is asked during 'ask the audience' the lights also change, with lights flashing on the audience to create suspense.

The spotlight acts to intensify and highlight Tarrent and contestant as they are centre of attention. The spotlight moves backwards and forwards during the game, from Tarrent to the audience. For example, when the audience is asked to help out the contestant, the spotlight and pressure moves off the contestant and Tarrent and onto the audience so then all the pressure lies on the audience. The main effect of the spotlight is to put the contestant on the spot creating a lot of pressure for them. In 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' as the contestant is put on the spotlight Tarrent will then cut to commercial. This is usually very sudden and generally leaves both the audience at home

an in the studio in anticipation. This is used at crucial point to prolong the tension. This technique is normally used at the peak of tension. This technique is manipulated by the presenter at key moments, for instance when answering the £250, 000 question.

At the beginning of the game show Tarrent begins informally. He is relaxed and humorous, but becomes more formal and objective as the questions continue. Tarrent is often associated with humorous television programmes and his world famous radio show. Tarrent appeals to a wide target audience which further increases the popularity of the show. The presenter is also very important to 'Who want to be a Millionaire?' as he manipulates and is in charge of all the devices used in the programme. At this point the tone in his voice is firm and he is very distant. While on the other hand he can be more relaxed the camera, at this stage he is more humours and his facial expression changes to suit his mood and the tone in his voice is safer this usually happens in between question to relieve tension. The presenter tries to humour the contestant so that he does not make them feel too pressurised, so he changes the tension in which the game is being played from more serious to less this keep the presenter in control.

In addition at the start of the game show the pace is quite slow, and then the background music adds to the pace speeding up as the questions proceed and become harder. This change adds excitement so that it does not lead the audience to boredom. In 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' The questions start off fast and then slow down as the questions set harder leading to more pressure on the contestant.

Different camera shots are used throughout the whole programme mainly during questioning. Close up shots are used when the contestant is being asked a question this shot will focus clearly in detail the facial expressions both being displayed by Tarrent and contestant for example when Tarrent ask the contestant ' are you sure?' this shot is very effective as it shows strain and tension the player is under.

The music is also an important technique and has various connotations. The opening music is lively and the pace is fast. The introduction is impressive, and then as the music dies down and Tarrent enters, the music begins once again but this time it is louder and spectacular suggesting the importance of the presenter and indicating the beginning of the show. As the questions proceed and get harder, the player is offered three choices to help them with the questions, phone a friend, fifty-fifty or ask the audience. The music adds to the nervous tension that the player is experiencing. As the player finishes there is no music played. This is because the pressure can now be moved onto some one else. There are many different sound effects used such as, during the ' fastest finger' section there are symbol noises finishing off with robotic music. During the questions drum rolls are used at the peak of a question letting the player wait in anticipation. Also in the ' phone a friend' section there is no music but the sound of a clock that is tick tocking indicating that there is not a lot of time to answer the question.

The background sounds also vary a lot. At first you can hear heartbeat sounds while questions are being asked this is to mimic the contestants own heart beat creating suspense depending on whether or not the player has

answered the question correctly. If the question is right the music will descend and it will become silent indicating that the player has lost.

Pauses are also used after the question has been answered to build up the suspense at this point the presenter might choose to cut to commercial. A pause during a meager question issued by Tarrent and is very effective. The pause allows the contestant and audience to become anxious.

The presenter also repeats the phrase “ are you sure?” This question is used because Tarrent is trying to make the player rethink their options. Repetition is often used throughout the game show to grab audience’s attention and to emphasise something of the importance – like the significance of the reply. The aim of repetition is used to create doubt in the contestant and to increase viewing pleasure.

The effectiveness of the media devices used to control the tension and suspense in ‘ Who want to be a Millionaire?’ shapes the show and is responsible for its popularity. Without all the different devices used then the show would not be effective enough meaning the audience that it is aimed at would not take any interest. The most effective device used is the presenter who manipulates various and other devices during the game and ensures that suspense and viewing figures are maintained.