

# Waterloo road essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The BBC drama “ Waterloo Road” appeals to the audience because it represents easily identifiable stereotypes that teens can relate to. It also represents modern school life in an engaging way that is familiar to the target audience of teens and adults find it intriguing. Issues surrounding education and young people are explored which helps the audience to understand and reflect. “ Waterloo Road” offers a positive representation of young people and it upholds morality. It also shows a more reasonable truth about what some teenagers are really like.

The drama is aimed mainly at teenagers, although children and adults may enjoy watching it. The teens enjoy the insight to the teachers and senior management, for example, teachers relationships etc. , along with the challenging students and their older peers. Another target audience is parents and grandparents because they like to have an insight into the lives of their children at school. This creates talking points and this is why I think “ Waterloo Road” is a relatively safe family viewing, because families would want to watch it together.

Teachers and education professionals may be interested in “ Waterloo Road” because they might like to see how other schools, particularly failing schools, are run as the ideas may be completely different to the professionals. There are many stereotypes in “ Waterloo Road”, for example, Bolton Smilie is a black kid who is a thorn in the side of the teachers. When he does turn up to class he’s generally empty handed and disruptive, often lasting only half the lesson before he’s packed off to the cooler. Bolton isn’t a violent kid, but he’s a cheeky pain in the neck.

At home, Bolton rules the roost and his single mother, Candice is at her wit's end and will do anything to keep him in school. The family difficulties causes him to act this way but in one episode the promise of a job and being listened to changes everything and resolves his personal issues. Another stereotype is Davina Shackleton, or known as Davina Shagathon to some students. Davina is sexy, sassy and much smarter than her knockout looks would have you believe. She is represented as “ glamorous”; she's conscientious, professional and ambitious.

She used to be a P. A. ut has since become a Learning Support Assistant. She has a natural talent for teaching, but is she an LSA who makes a difference? Davina has had many relationships within the school, which includes a student, a previous head and a teacher. Matt Wilding, a talented musician and boyishly good-looking is keen to impress in his first teaching post. He'll work at things that really interest him, such as the first musical production at Waterloo Road, but he'll do anything to avoid the boring chores of teaching. Matt's fit, stylish, and is the new heart-throb for the girls.

What they don't know is that Matt is gay and has been with Colin, his boyfriend, for three years, but still refers to him as his ' housemate'. He doesn't think there is any point in telling everyone he is gay, and there's that little sticking point of being openly gay in a school... the last thing he wants is snotty-nosed little kids screaming at him in the corridor. Eddie Lawson is a charismatic and inspirational teacher with a genuine passion for the job. Eddie has a natural authority and the pupils know not to cross him, but underneath he's warm and self-deprecating.

High in emotional intelligence, Eddie's a natural people person who enjoys the status and reputation of 'Mr Fixit'. He has a down to earth approach to teaching but he's also not afraid of change. Eddie's own experience at school has given him a natural empathy with the 'difficult kids' and he can handle himself in the classroom. Communicating with adolescents is something Eddie does with exceptional skill. Recently divorced, Eddie's single but with the arrival of a new member of staff sparks soon start flying.

Janeece Bryant is a stereotyped loudmouth. She's not afraid to start a fight if someone's annoying her and can be seen as a bit of a bully, though she is fiercely loyal to her friends. She does have a soft centre, but hardly anyone ever gets to see it. Janeece is a bright girl, but laziness and not seeing the point in education caused her to fail her GCSE's. However, former Deputy Head, Andrew Treneman inspired an interest in palaeontology on a school trip to the museum and now she is determined to work hard and make something of herself.

Janeece has a heart of gold but a mind as malleable as putty. In a particular episode we watched, Waterloo Road was trying out new initiatives to prepare the students for work. By teaching them how to write a CV and showing them interview skills the school is making education meaningful for the students and also they are learning important life skills. The parent of a student with learning difficulties develops a crush on Davina, which causes nothing but trouble for her. It seems that he has his own emotional problems and Davina is vulnerable to parents' attention.

This shows the importance of boundaries in a teaching profession, if the parent had made a formal complaint about Davina she could get in a lot of trouble and even lose her job. While all this is going on the head Rachel Mason is being blackmailed by an entrepreneur, Stuart Hardly, whose bid to build a training centre at Waterloo Road was rejected, and if she didn't help her he threatened to reveal her past which could end her career. In this episode the audience learn about the issues included and they also learn ways of coping with them.

The mis-en-scene for shots of the school looks very business-like and glossy. The school seems very resourced and the behaviour of the students is almost perfect, but a normal school probably wouldn't look like that. You get a lot of shots in the car park, the staff room, and various classrooms and teachers offices. The scenes set in these locations are iconographic to teenagers watching it. A lot is packed into one episode because " Waterloo Road" has a multi-stranded storyline.

The storylines are very far-fetched and what happens in one episode of " Waterloo Road" in a normal school would most likely happen over a period of 10 years. The narrative of every episode resolves around a problem, which is usually resolved before the end of the episode. For example the equilibrium is disrupted in an episode when a widowed parent becomes obsessed with a teacher, but also at the same time the kids are excited when they hear that there's a real job up for offer. Bolton in particular is showing uncharacteristic enthusiasm.

This episode explores the agony and stress of bereavement as well as young people's desire to get job. So much happens in an hour in the school. The classes are extremely well behaved and the school is clean, tidy and well resourced. There are neat solutions to every problem and therefore equilibrium is restored by the end of each episode. Although the series can be watched by families, it is quite gritty and hard hitting at times and some people could question the appropriateness of the content at times for a family audience.

There are many scenes that are overtly sexual and even in one episode the storyline dealt with prostitution and pimps. However, this point could be argued that this is a very effective way to inform and also educate a large audience in the temptations and dangers that exist for young people today. The stories in each episode could provoke meaningful discussions between parents and their children and so have a very useful purpose.

As the BBC remit to inform, educate and entertain the narrative needs the audience to suspend their disbeliefs and just accept the compressed events and the different stereotypes. This effective and popular programme is under the public service broadcasting banner. " Waterloo Road" has a positive representation of young people. Most students are represented as intelligent, witty and caring, for example, Bolton seem like a challenging youth but in one episode he changes as a job is offered, we see a different side to him.

Everyone has something to offer, they just need to find their niche and this is promoted in the script. Quite a few characters are very good and there is always an explanation for the bad behaviour in the series, which usually the

parents have all the blame pinned onto them. The restrictions of budget affect the storylines, which often results in unbelievable storylines, for example, an entrepreneur blackmails the head, and just when the head thinks it's all over he comes out with something else for her to do, still threatening to reveal her secret.

There are many other storylines that take a turn for the worst, but there are also some which turn out good. “ Waterloo Road” is a BBC programme. The BBC has a duty to inform, educate and entertain viewers. It is an impartial, unbiased company and their funds are raised through licensing fees, and because of this they do not need to advertise. The BBC is a Public Service Broadcaster (PSB), so you don't have to pay to watch it as it is subsidised. Writers in “ Waterloo Road” have an agenda to promote recent Government initiatives and to show how they work to the public.

The easily identifiable stereotypes in “ Waterloo Road” appeal to the audience because they can relate to them. It also represents young people in a positive way and the teenagers on the programme reflect how teenagers in the real world are really like. Modern school life in the programme is familiar to the target audience and older people may enjoy watching how teenagers act in schools compared to how they used to act. The issues dealt with in the programme are explored in great depth and require the audience to think.