**Higher Media Assignment Exemplars – Planning phase part 3 – Audience research**

**Exemplar 1**

Through my audience research I conducted a survey of my peers and school teachers to gain an insight into the knowledge my peers already have on the musical, We Will Rock You and what the majorities’ favourite set of characters are within the play. Carrying out this survey revealed that 50% of those the majority of the audience will be able to relate to her. The age group that took part in my survey were 15-18 year olds so therefore my target audience will be that age group. Because this age group filled out my survey I now have a clear idea of the style of movie the majority prefer.

My survey revealed that 93.33% of the people who undertook my survey have heard of We Will Rock You, with only 6.67% having not heard of it. These statistics did not surprise me as last year the school performed their own version of the musical so many pupils within the school are at least aware of the musical.

I wanted to establish what characters would be the best to bring to life. I wanted to create a dark comedy so I had thought of bringing in the two villains the musical- Kashogi and killer Queen. Also, they are my favourite characters within the musical. However, I did not know if these characters were favoured by others so I wanted to find out what the majority of my target audience felt were the best pair to star. Fortunately for me 73.33% of those carrying out the survey said that their favourite characters within the musical were Killer Queen and Commander Kashog with only 6.67% saying that Galileo and Scaramouche were there favourites. This allows me to keep to my original plan and theme.

The genre I have chosen for my film is fantasy. I know what my preferences are when it comes to fantasy films but I did not know many others. I was not entirely sure on how to end my film so I asked the question “How do you prefer fantasy films ending?” I put two options, one being ending on a cliff hanger and the other being with some sort of resolution. The results showed that both were as popular as one another with an even 40% for both. This means that I will have to decide which one I would prefer.

I wanted to know what my audience want in a fantasy film and what their preferences are with these types of films. I had already intended for my film to have humour in it and this was confirmed when 60% stated that they would like humour in the film. 20% of those answering said they like mystery in a fantasy film and 13.33% said they liked fantasy films to have a serious undertone. These results are pretty ideal for the type of film I had already intended to create as I want to create a dark comedy.

Answering the survey was female with 33.33% being male. I had already planned for my protagonist to be female and this information confirms that decision as the majority of the audience will be able to relate to her.

I would like the audience to view the characters in my short film a specific way and therefore have a preferred reading for my characters. I would like the protagonist to be viewed as a modern day/ “everyday” pupil in school who is curious and defiant; I will show this by her insistence on continuing to read the script regardless of the warning signs. I hope to create the image of her being an “everyday” pupil by my use of costume design. She will be dressed in my school’s school uniform (A white shirt, black skirt and a black tie) showing the audience clearly that she is a pupil within a school. I am going to create my Gaga girl as an exact replica of the character she plays. I seek to make this character as realistic as possible, so much so that she only reads the lines that the protagonist has read out prior to her existence and then shuts down. Therefore, I want the audience to view her as a synthetic/ robotic type character. When it comes to Kashoggi i would like him to have a bit more free will and for him to speak lines not only from the musical. I intend to give him humorous dialogue so would therefore like if my audience saw him as a humorous character, not to be taken too seriously. Killer Queen however, has one line and is hidden in the shadows. This shows that she is a dark and mysterious character and I intend for her to be seen this way and to be seen as a bigger evil unleashed.

**Exemplar 2**

In order to work out what my audience of 13-16 year olds would want I created a survey and posed it to said age group. In my survey I asked if my audience would prefer the protagonist to defeat the henchmen with ease or with difficulty. If the protagonist defeats them easily it would give the impression of the character being highly skilled and paint him as a classic action hero. On the other hand difficulty would seem more thrilling and create suspense. The results were 51.85% for easy and 48.15% for difficult. I made my storyboard with this in mind; this also influences the length of the film. I decided to make the climactic battle last longer because of how quickly the protagonist defeats the henchmen. I was originally planning for the film’s opening to jump straight into the action but my online survey, taken by 13-16 year olds, indicates an audience would prefer the opening to have a more mysterious tone, which has led me to alter my storyboard and draw in the corridor scene.

I also asked in my survey if the audience would prefer an action comedy to focus on comedy, action or equal parts both. Equal parts both won out with 53.85%. I made my storyboard with this in mind, the first scene focusing on action, the final scene on comedy and the second blending both genres.

I based my ending on my audience research. There were three options. The ending could be, satisfying, over the top dramatic or anti-climactic. Over the top dramatic would fit with action movies and an anti-climactic ending would work out as the punch line of a comedic film. Anti-climactic came first with 37.04% and over the top dramatic came second with 33.33% which led to my decision to have an anti-climactic ending that revealed the enigmatic protagonist was just an over-competitive teenager. The popularity of the over the top dramatic option also helped lead to my decision to include a lengthy, rather absurd, fight scene.

The preferred reading I want for my film is that of an action comedy that can be enjoyed without having to think too deeply about the story. This is why I have an action comedy genre, both of these tones can be shown without in depth story telling. My audience will know it is an action movie because of the tense soundtrack and then mise-en-scene of the guns. I will anchor the humorous tone with the unexpected punchline of the final scene and the stark contrast of the absurd battle with Gertrude and serious fighting that had taken place before-hand.

The typical mode of address in action films is that of a third person linear narrative. Generally, exposition is given both visually and in dialogue. Since there is no dialogue in my film all exposition will be achieved visually. The humour in my film will hopefully appeal to a universal audience as the humour used is not directed at a specific gender. However, it is fairly immature humour which is intended for a fairly young audience which is who I am targeting. Stereotypically a male audience appreciates action movies more than a female one. They will relate to a male protagonist which is part of the reason my protagonist is male. The actions of the protagonist will also appeal to a young audience as they are used to having little control over their lives due to school and parents. I plan on taking advantage of this psychological desire to extend control over personal life by using a very assured protagonist who can overcome challenges like Gertrude and has full control of his actions as evidenced by the sheer determination of his enigmatic vendetta.

**Exemplar 3**

I have done a lot of research into the topic of cyber bullying. Through this I have found that a third of 10-18 year olds say they’ve been cyber bullied at the website <https://www.dosomething.org/facts/11-facts-about-cyber-bullying>. This has led me to believe that aiming the short film at the age range that is most likely to be the victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying would help to stop it. This has also confirmed to me that my target audience should be 12-18 year olds.

I have also produced a survey for my class of males and female students between the ages of 16-18, where I have asked people to answer a few questions about what they would like to see and what they already know. Through this I found many things that I am going to use in my short film. I found out that 78.13% of the people who have taken part in my survey have seen cyber bullying online which confirmed to me that this would be a good topic to make a public information film as it is a wide spread issue that a lot of people have heard about.

Through my survey I have also found that 43.75% have said that they believe facts would help them to understand cyber bullying and 28.13% said they believed a fictionalized documentary would help them to understand. My initial idea was to do a fictionalized documentary but due to the fact that many people believed facts would help them I decided to add more facts to my short film to suit my target audience. I decided against doing interviews as it is a very sensitive topic and many people who have been cyber bullied don’t want to talk about it. I also believed that a fictionalised documentary can create a more dramatic and emotional effect and this is what I was looking to do in my film to get across how serious the issue of cyber bullying is and I believe that this would be a good way of doing this.

I also asked people if they believed that music created an atmosphere, 100% said that they believed it did. This showed me that I should use some sort of emotional music in my public service film to create a sad and emotional atmosphere. I intend to use music throughout my film but I would like to change the music from a happy/relaxed style of music to a more dramatic/sad piece of music when the equilibrium is disturbed.

Through my audience research I asked a few questions to find out what people knew and what facts I should use in my short film. I found that many people believed cyber bullying victims and perpetrators were both girls and boys however through my research online I found that girls are twice as likely to be victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying at the website <http://nobullying.com/facts-about-cyber-bullying/>. This has showed me that I will need to tell people that girls are more likely to be the victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying. I will do this through my blank slides with facts on them but I will also use a girl as my actress for the girl who is being cyber bullied to show that it is more common for girls to be cyber bullied.

**Exemplar 4**

My survey is called ‘Comedy Films Survey’ and it consists of 8 different questions. The eight questions are, What is your gender?, What is your age?, What is your favourite aspects about comedy films?, What makes you want to see a film?, What is your favourite comedy film and why?, What is your favourite comedy genre?, Are you willing to see a comedy film that tries new ideas? And what do you find most funny in a comedy film (character’s dialogue, physical humour)?

The results that I got from my survey are going to influence factors in my film so I can cater to the specific tastes of the audience whom I plan to show my film to.

Through my first question I found out that the majority of people who answered my survey were male being ten (52.63% or 53% of respondents) whilst the number or females who answered my survey were 9 (47.37% or 46%). The second question revealed the age group who answered my survey remained fairly consistent; 17 people who answered my survey ranged from 12 to 18 (84.47% or 84%), 1 person who answered my survey ranged from 19 to 24 (5.26% or 5%) and the last person who answered my survey ranged from 25 to 32 (5.26% or 5%). My third question asked ‘What is your favourite aspect about comedy films. The reason I included this question in my survey was to see what most of my audience enjoyed in a comedy film so I could implement those aspects into my film. Many people mentioned their favourite aspect about comedy films is the dialogue. My film contains no speaking whatsoever so this proved to be a problem. The purpose of my film is primarily to be funny and if it isn’t then ultimately it has failed its purpose. I considered changing my film to solely cater to my audiences wants and desires by featuring the characters talking, poking fun at each other and making funny remarks however I had already changed my film once by removing the idea of the characters talking whatsoever. This was frustrating as I have limited time to shoot my film and do everything else. I had already abandoned the script I began to write and I had already changed my storyboard, doing this a second time meant I’d have to completely reform my film for a second time meaning It’d cut into the little time I had to film so ultimately I decided to continue with the current plans. My fourth question asked ‘What makes you want to see a film?’ The respondents could choose from 4 choices. From the question results I found out 9 people (47.37% or 47%) would see a film if it has witty and funny dialog. 2 people (10.53% or 11%) would see a film if it contains physical humour. Four people (21.05% or 21%) would see a film if it featured actors who they like. Another four people chose the other response. The majority wanted a combination of both i.e. if it has funny and witty dialog and funny physical humour. My fifth question asked the respondent what their favourite comedy film is. I got a variety of different results but almost none of the films the respondents put down were similar to my film which again could affect my films success. The Sixth question on my survey asked what the respondent’s favourite comedy-genre is. The majority of respondents enjoyed romantic-comedies. My film contains no romance or romantic situations so my film might potentially not meet my audience’s needs. Question seven asked ‘Would you see a comedy film that tries new ideas?’ 15 respondents said yes (78.95% or 79%), there were no respondents who chose the no option and 4 people (21.05% or 21%) chose the ‘I’m not sure’ option. The purpose of this question was to see if people would even be willing to see a comedy film that’s different, that still intends to make an audience laugh but in a different manner which my film will try to do.

**Exemplar 5**

In my audience research, I made a survey on Survey Monkey. I printed it out and went round classes in my school to ask a few people to fill them out, making sure I was including age groups of 15-18 and both genders. I asked older people (at my work) to fill them out too so I can include 18-30 year olds and also include my social class of C2. In that research, it was shown that my audience prefers gore (66%) over paranormal (28%) or psychological horror (6%). Females tend to like horror films a bit more (56%), but it was still quite down the middle. I was originally going to do a more paranormal horror film and have the villain to be a spirit, but because of my research I changed that and made them a serial killer instead, which will better suit my target audience. Because females are more likely to go watch a horror film, I’m going to have my main character be female so they can make a connection with her, and this works to my advantage as horror films tend to have a female character that’s killed off first.

In my survey I also found out that many people think that having real life situations like watching a movie, having a shower, cooking, being in your own home etc. is much scarier than it would be if they were to go to an abandoned house, or be in the woods because it’s something that everyone does and that provokes fear. Because of this, I changed my storyboard slightly to make the victim watching a movie, in a blanket on the couch instead of her coming home from a party. My original storyboard would also be hard to do as I can’t control the weather or the lighting and because it would have been outside, I could have disturbed my neighbours and therefore my new storyboard works better.

I knew from my research done online that having a female character or a character that does ‘unacceptable’ things (drugs, sex, petty crime, being dumb) would work in my type of film better. Taking that further by making her blonde and having a low cut top on or shorts makes her seem sexual and that’s used a lot in movies; ‘Scream’ the first to go is a blonde, big breasted female called Casey Becker. My audience research in my survey also showed me that around 85% preferred having an attractive female character to play the part of the victim. In ‘Scream’ it’s shown that Casey is settling down to watch a horror film, ‘Halloween’ and ‘A Nightmare on Elm Street’ both of which have the killers murdering female characters and so I am choosing a female part for my film to fit into this role and also attract my intended audience.