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Studio planning and production of content for educational or informational purposes require great care to achieve a polished presentation. Poorly produced content dissuades people from continuing to listen to the content and leaves an inferior perception of the creator.

Quality production and planning of content can be achieved at minimal cost if the creator sets out with proper organization, the outline of crucial goals, and creative presentation. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then surely an adequately written script that focuses on the goals is worth the effort to enlighten the intended audience.

Please feel free to contact either the Publication Director (Derek Bullard) or myself if you have any questions or comments regarding The Media Streaming Journal.

Namaste

David Childers

The Grand Master of Digital Disaster
(Editor In Chief)

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<div align="center">

David Childers

The Grand Master of Digital Disaster

<u>Current Member</u>: International Association Of Internet Broadcasters

<u>Former Member</u>: Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers

</div>

Published Author

Introduction To Internet Broadcasting
Amazon Publishing

Numerous Creative Commons Computer, Technical and Internet Broadcasting Guides
http://www.ScenicRadio.com/Library/BroadGuide/index.html

Newspaper Interviews

New York Times	Lagniappe - "Something Extra for Mobile"
Internet TV: Don't Touch That Mouse!	Mobile Gets Hoaxed
Tim Gnatek	Rob Holbert
July 1, 2004	Mar 16, 2016

Cited By

Five Essays on Copyright In the Digital Era	Turre Publishing
Ville Oksanen	Helsinki Finland
2009	

Open Source Developer

Developed software architecture to continuously source multimedia content to Youtube Live servers.
Scenic Television – The sights and sounds of nature on the Internet.
http://www.ScenicRadio.com

Projects

Researched and developed documentation for Peercast P2P multimedia streaming project.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PeerCast

Researched and developed technical documentation for NSV / Winamp Television.
http://web.archive.org/web/20080601000000*/http://www.scvi.net

MidSummer Eve Webfest

A virtual International festival focusing on Digital art and Free Software that was coordinated by OrganicaDTM Design Studio.

Presentation and discussion regarding Internet multimedia content distribution.
http://web.archive.org/web/20061104230522/http://www.organicadtm.com/index.php?module=articles&func=display&catid=37&aid=61

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The Media Streaming Journal

What is in this edition of the Media Streaming Journal

How To
Design and Produce Radio Serial Drama Social Development
A Program Manager's Guide

How To
Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development
A Script Writer's Manual

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Magazine cover:

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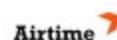
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How To
Design and Produce Radio Serial Drama Social Development
A Program Manager's Guide

This book is designed to guide the program manager in charge of an IEC project using Enter-Educate serial drama through the various stages of project development.

The Design Approach which is detailed in the book is equally effective – with minor alteration – for video serial drama productions. Indeed, program managers engaged in any type of media programming for health communication projects will find the Design Approach valuable.

Prepared for the John Hopkins Center for Communications Programs with primary support from United States Agency for International Development under Population Communications Services Project, Cooperative Agreement DPE-3052-A-00-0014-00.

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How To
Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development
A Script Writer's Manual

This book is a practical manual for script writers preparing radio serial dramas for development projects. It will be useful both for novices and experienced script writers who have not yet written drama that educates as well as entertains.

Prepared for the John Hopkins Center for Communications Programs with primary support from United States Agency for International Development under Population Communications Services Project, Cooperative Agreement DPE-3052-A-00-0014-00.

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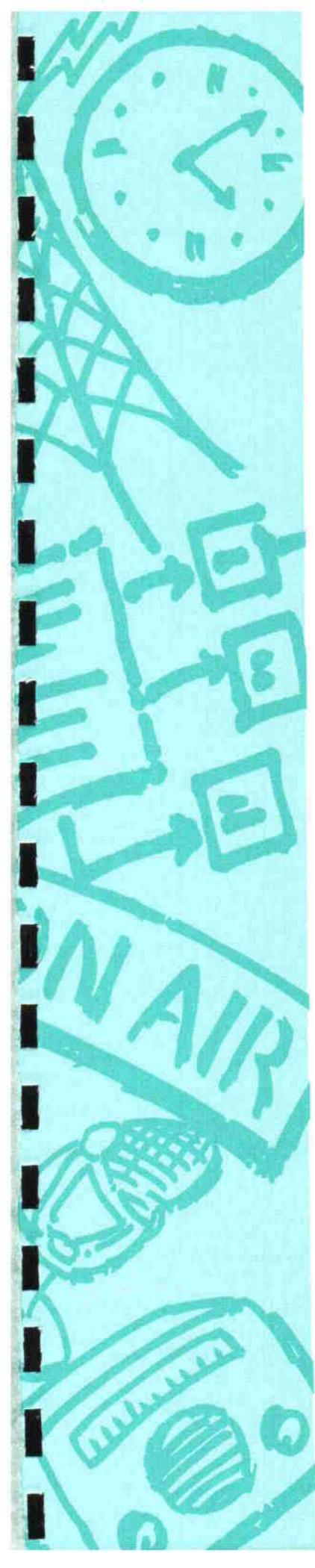radio_announcer.png.html

How To

Design and Produce Radio Serial Drama for Social Development

A Program Manager's Guide

How To

Design and Produce Radio Serial Drama for Social Development

### A Program Manager's Guide

by Esta de Fossard

Acknowledgments

The Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP) coined the term Enter-Educate, a contraction of the words entertainment and education, which describes communication that delivers a pro-social educational message in an entertainment format. Enter-Educate has become a useful approach to encourage positive behavior change for social development because it is: pervasive—it reaches everyone, everywhere, via media, local events, music or drama; popular—people like and enjoy entertainment; persuasive—people are persuaded because they can see and copy role models; profitable—it generates revenue and helps pay for itself; passionate—evoking emotions that help to stir recall and action; personal—enabling individuals to identify strongly with the depicted characters; participatory—providing opportunities for many people to join in simple entertainment; it prompts to action— through a variety of specific reminders and cues; and it has proven effective—in a number of different evaluations throughout the world which show that Enter-Educate approaches really do influence people's attitudes, intentions, and behaviors.

JHU/CCP has developed and implemented over 135 Enter-Educate projects worldwide to deliver family planning and many related reproductive health messages. To disseminate innovations JHU/CCP publishes several series of publications. The How To series teaches readers how to use the tools, apply the skills, and replicate the methodologies that the Center has developed.

One increasingly popular form of Enter-Educate is the radio serial drama. Combining this popular entertainment format effectively with educational messages is a highly specialized activity, calling for meticulous program design, balanced story writing, and precise recording techniques. Esta de Fossard, actress, author, scriptwriter, trainer, Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health faculty member, and Enter-Educator, has been involved with radio for over 30 years and has taught countless others around the world to develop and produce their own radio serial dramas. She is the author of a previous How To manual, *How To Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: a Script Writer's Manual.* Based on her experience, this volume provides a guide for managers of health communication programs interested in using Enter-Educate serial drama.

The author would like to thank all those who have contributed to the finalization of this volume, including especially, Anne Palmer, Karen Heckert, and the team of the PCS Nepal Field Office, particularly Marsha McCoskrie and Dibya Man Karmacharya. Special thanks are due to the author's husband, Harvey Nelson, for his constant support and frequent checking of the manuscript in progress, and for the photographs used on the first page of each chapter in this book.

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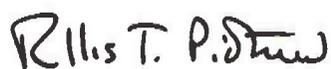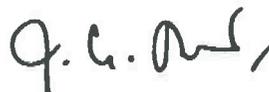
Using This Book

This book is designed to guide the program manager in charge of an IEC project using Enter-Educate serial drama through the various stages of project development.

The Design Approach which is detailed in the book is equally effective—with minor alterations—for video serial drama production. Indeed, program managers engaged in any type of media programming for health communication projects will find the Design Approach valuable.

From time to time throughout this book, references are made to the companion volume, *How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Manual.* Program managers will find it valuable to have a copy of this manual on hand, for their own information and as a textbook for the writers in their project.

Copies of the *Script Writer's Manual* and other publications may be obtained by contacting: Center Publications, JHU/CCP, 111 Market Place, Suite 310, Baltimore, MD 21202; e-mail should be directed to ctrpubs@jhuccp.org.

Esta de Fossard
1998

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Serial Drama for Social Development
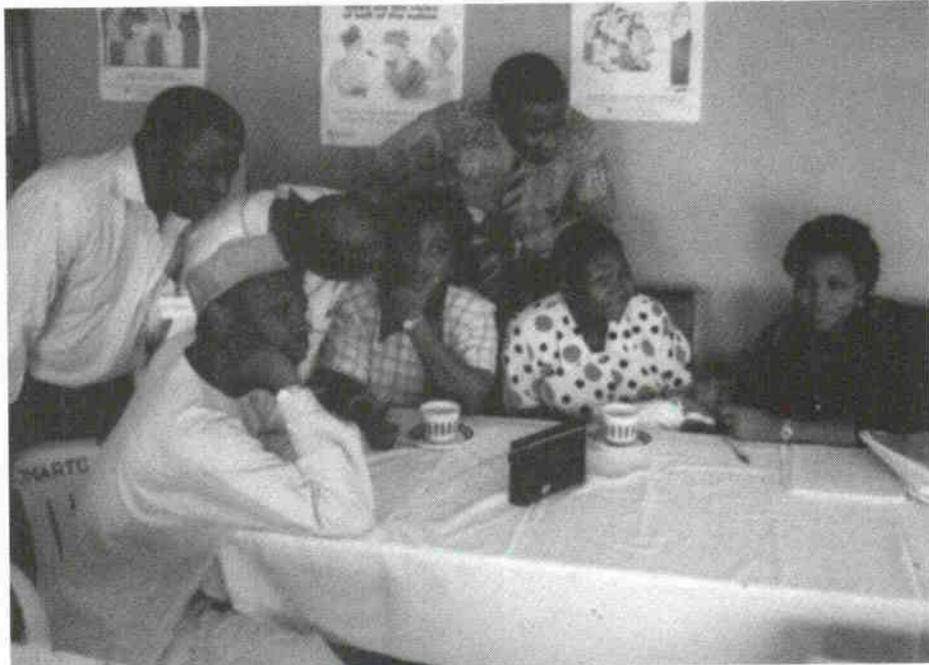
Enter-Educate serial drama attracts attention.

Topics in This Chapter

- ❖ **The role of the program manager**
- ❖ **Serial drama for social development communication**
- ❖ **Characteristics of serial drama**
- ❖ **Enter-Educate serial drama**
- ❖ **The Seven Cs of effective communication**
- ❖ **Creating Enter-Educate serial drama**
- ❖ **Types of Enter-Educate serial drama**
- ❖ **Starting up the radio serial drama project**
    - • The phases of the P Process
- ❖ **The Design Approach**

The Role of the Program Manager

The **program manager** is the person who has full charge of all aspects of the design and production of the **serial drama**. In different countries, the program manager has various titles: executive producer, media producer, program director, etc. Whatever the title, the duties are the same. The program manager has a senior position in the project office, and will be answerable to the project director or country representative in charge of the Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) project as a whole. The program manager should be a person with strong managerial skills, a commitment to the IEC project as a whole, and (where possible) previous experience with the organization of a project making use of the media for social development purposes. It is the program manager who, first and foremost, must have a thorough understanding of all the steps necessary to design, create, and produce a successful Enter-Educate [1] serial drama. The aim of this book is to provide systematic guidance for program managers in the steps and activities needed for the successful design, creation, and production of Enter-Educate serial drama for development purposes. The first important step is a clear understanding of the characteristics and attributes of serial drama.

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[1] The term Enter-Educate was introduced by communicators at Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP) to describe any communication intervention that presents an educational message in an entertaining format, such as music, dance, story, live theater, or serial drama on television or radio.

Serial Drama for Social Development Communication

Throughout the world, radio and television are popular media for disseminating social development messages. Spots, jingles, and commercials have proved effective in delivering information to a large audience, particularly on radio, which has an almost universal reach in most countries. These formats, however, are not always as effective as desired in actually effecting social change, because they tend to be didactic rather than persuasive. More successful is a format that combines the educational message with an entertaining format: the Enter-Educate approach. The popular entertainment medium, serial drama, can be employed successfully for development purposes if it is very carefully designed. In order to adapt serial drama to development needs, it is necessary for all involved to understand something of the characteristics that contribute to its universal appeal.

Characteristics of Serial Drama

Serial drama is a story, in dramatized form, that continues over weeks, months, or years. Serial drama can be likened to a novel in which the story is revealed chapter by chapter over many pages rather than being completed in a few paragraphs or pages like an essay or a short story. Similarly, serial drama divides the dramatized story into episodes that are broadcast regularly, sometimes at the rate of one a day, but more commonly at the rate of one a week, over an extended period of time. Most often this is a twelve-month period, but some serial dramas run much longer. In England, the radio serial drama *The Archers* has been running for over 40 years and is broadcast six days a week. In Indonesia, the serial drama *Butir Butir di Laut (Grains of Sand in the Sea)* was on the air for well over twenty years, before being rejuvenated as *Lilin Lilin Di Dipan (Guiding Light)*, a serial which is still being broadcast five days a week year-round.

Serial drama is popular because it reflects the simple adage "people like people." Serial drama's ongoing story allows the audience to become intimately engaged in the lives of people other than themselves. It involves a rich diversity of characters (many of whom closely resemble real people known to the audience) in a collection of different plots. Serial drama tends to exaggerate passions and thereby provides a vicarious emotional outlet for the audience. Perhaps this is the strongest attraction of serial drama, that the ongoing nature of the story allows the audience to develop strong feelings about the individual characters and what happens

Characteristics of Serial Drama

Serial drama gives the audience:

1. an ongoing story

2. intimate involvement in the lives of others

3. a rich diversity of characters

4. a collection of different plots

5. a vicarious emotional outlet

6. the opportunity to develop strong feelings about the characters and their behavior.

Box 1

to them. Audience members find themselves loving some characters dearly, despising others, wanting to help those in need, and to be like those they admire. Serial drama can have a powerful effect on individuals and on a society.

Enter-Educate Serial Drama

It is not surprising, therefore, that serial drama is being used increasingly not only for entertainment, but also—in the form of Enter-Educate drama—as a major component of multi-faceted IEC projects.

Every Enter-Educate product consists of two equally important parts: the format (entertainment) and the message (education). The purpose of entertainment is to attract and hold the attention of the audience by engaging their emotions. The purpose of education is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the learners so that they can make better use of their personal abilities to enrich and improve their own lives.

Entertainment does not have to be amusing or funny. Tragedies, mysteries, love stories, and even the events of everyday life can be entertaining if they engage the emotions of their audiences. Education does not have to consist of boring, didactic, teacher-directed lessons. The real purpose of education is to provide those who are being educated with the best chance of reaching their fullest potential and talent. The education that is most appreciated and most sought after is that which is clearly relevant to and usable by the learners. The aim of Enter-Educate serial drama is to blend harmoniously these two equally important elements (emotional involvement and relevant knowledge), so that the audience can learn about and realize, through the role-model characters in the drama, the advantages of the new behaviors to their own lives.

The Seven Cs of Effective Communication

> ## The Seven Cs of Effective Communication
>
> 1. **Command attention**
> 2. **Cater to the heart and the head**
> 3. **Call to action**
> 4. **Clarify the message**
> 5. **Communicate a benefit**
> 6. **Create trust**
> 7. **Convey a consistent message**

Every successful form of communication follows seven basic principles, often referred to as the *Seven Cs of Effective Communication.*[2] When used for purposes of social development, Enter-Educate serial drama is found to demonstrate the *Seven Cs* almost better than any other form of communication:

[2] J.R. Williams, JHU/CCP

1. **Command attention.** All the world loves a story and all the world loves the opportunity to listen in on the lives of other people. Serial drama tells several stories at once; stories that engage the listeners' emotions and that continue over a period of time. Serial drama commands the attention of the audience, not just once but repeatedly. It holds the attention of the audience as they wait to find out how the various joys and sorrows of the story interweave and unravel. As listeners become emotionally involved in the story, their attention is naturally attracted to the message at the same time.

2. **Cater to the heart and the head.** Social development messages inevitably appeal to the intelligence and logic of those to whom they are addressed; they appeal to the head (the mind). Life experience shows, however, that people are likely to have a more lasting remembrance of and a stronger response to matters that touch the emotions (the heart) as well as the mind. Enter-Educate serial drama successfully caters to both the head and the heart, with the harmonious blending of a story that engages listeners' emotions and demonstrates the logic of the message in the lives of the story characters.

3. **Call to action.** One of the most powerful motivators of human behavior is the desire to be like people who are universally or even personally admired. Serial drama can present characters with strong audience appeal; characters the audience wants to emulate. When listeners observe their favorite drama characters improving their lives by adopting a new behavior, they want to follow suit. Instructing listeners didactically to adopt a certain behavior usually does not succeed in calling them to action as powerfully as does the motivation provided by the behavior of characters they admire.

4. **Clarify the message.** Serial drama has two major advantages as a carrier of social development messages: 1) it continues over many months, or even years, and 2) it contains several plots and many characters. The fact that serial drama is ongoing means that the message can be introduced gradually and can be repeated as necessary. The audience, therefore, has the best possible chance of understanding the message, even if they must hear it several times before its relevance to their own lives becomes obvious. The variety of plots and characters allows the message to be introduced in different ways. This variety increases the likelihood that people with differing personalities and from varying walks of life will have the chance to see how the recommended new behavior is relevant to their own lives.

5. **Communicate a benefit.** Serial drama is a demonstrative rather than a declarative medium. The drama does not **tell** the audience the benefit of a new behavior. It **shows** them how other people (the characters in the story) benefit by a change in behavior. One of the cardinal rules of good communication is "Show, don't tell." Serial drama is an extremely powerful "showing" tool even when it is presented through the medium of radio. As the benefit of the recommended behavior is shown clearly in the lives of the drama characters, so it becomes communicated in a relevant and realistic way to the listening audience.

6. **Create trust.** Enter-Educate serial drama has the power to inspire trust in the audience, trust in the content of the message, and trust in those who promote the message. Many people hold real-life authority figures in a certain degree of awe. Even though they know that such people as doctors, lawyers, and government officials are held in high esteem, they never feel entirely comfortable with them. Serial drama has the ability to show such authority figures in more than their public role. It can present them as real people and in that way increase the audience's belief and trust in them. A health worker who is known personally to the audience through the story is much more likely to attract the trust of the listeners than is a public official who is known only in a formal setting. Listeners also are encouraged to trust the message in the drama by seeing their favorite characters confidently adopting the recommended new behaviors.

7. **Convey a consistent message.** A message heard once, or only occasionally is likely to be forgotten or suspect. A message that is heard repeatedly and consistently is more likely to raise at least curiosity. This curiosity leads in turn to the desire for more knowledge from which a personal, rational decision can be made. By its nature, serial drama is a format that allows for repetition, and when that repetition is consistent and clear, it is likely to be considered seriously by those who hear it.

Creating Enter-Educate Serial Drama

The Seven Cs of Effective Communication can be demonstrated effectively through Enter-Educate serial drama, but only if every aspect of the drama is thoroughly and carefully planned and designed. Writing this type of drama is challenging, and the program manager needs to ensure that all those involved in the project appreciate the writer's task. Writers who have no previous experience with Enter-Educate writing will benefit from guidance on how to prepare an Enter-Educate serial drama successfully. The companion volume to this book, *How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Manual* is intended to provide just such guidance.

Writing an Enter-Educate serial drama is a complex task requiring not only the ability to write a good story, but a knowledge of the chosen audience and their current attitude toward the behavior the project hopes to change. It is also important to have precise and accurate details of the message and information to be shared with the audience, and to present these in an appropriate sequence. The writer, therefore, must be part of the **design team** (see chapter 3) from the project onset and must have access to a **script support team** (see chapter 2) throughout the duration of the writing process. The program manager should understand the fundamental steps that the writer should follow in the creation of a successful Enter-Educate serial drama.

Steps to be followed by the writer of the Enter-Educate serial drama

1. **Start with a good story.** The writer should create a primary story (the main plot) that will appeal to the chosen audience. The central action of

the main plot should allow for emotional involvement among the characters, ongoing dramatic conflict, and suspense. The story must be designed primarily to appeal to the audience, not to *be* the message.

2. **Develop two or three sub-plots.** Each sub-plot is a story on its own, with its own set of characters and dramatic conflicts. The aim of the sub-plots is to allow for the inclusion of a variety of characters and a selection of life experiences, so that the serial overall can appeal to the widest possible audience

3. **Develop an event list for each plot.** Working from the message information in the design document (see chapter 2), the writer determines which of the plots will carry which part of the message. It is then necessary to decide what events (such as the birth of a child, a disease outbreak, or the arrival of newcomers to the community) will have to occur within each plot to allow the message to be brought into the story naturally, gradually, and subtly.

4. **Compile detailed character profiles.** For the characters to involve and affect the audience, it is essential that they are fully developed as real people. This can be achieved only if the writer puts together a full profile (complete with pictures or sketches if necessary) of what each character is like.

5. **Balance and blend the plots.** For the message to come into the story naturally and in accordance with the educational needs of the audience, the writer must decide the rate at which each plot will develop and the frequency with which each plot will appear in the ongoing episodes. It is important to avoid a story that is blatantly didactic, even while the message is present throughout the drama. Audiences inevitably tune out quickly if they recognize, *for example*, that the serial is "just another health message."

Enter-Educate serial drama can be divided into two classifications: that used for motivating a general audience to behavior change (non-technical Enter-Educate serial drama) and that used for providing specific, technical distance education to a remote professional audience such as rural health workers (technical knowledge Enter-Educate serial drama).

Types of Enter-Educate Serial Drama

Non-technical Enter-Educate serial drama typically is used to encourage a wide general audience to gain a greater appreciation of a new behavior, such as planning the family; to motivate them to seek out more information about how to adopt the new behavior, and to persuade them to become interested in practicing and advocating the new behavior as a norm for their society. A non-technical serial drama might provide some specific information, such as instruction on how to take oral contraceptive pills correctly, but the main emphasis is on motivation rather than on technical knowledge.

Technical knowledge Enter-Educate serial drama, on the other hand, is designed to increase specific technical knowledge in a professional audience. The objective of such serial drama is that the audience learn, retain, and

accurately use the technical knowledge gained as a result of listening to the serial. For this reason, technical knowledge serial drama can be used successfully for distance education purposes. A good example is the Nepal serial drama *Service Brings Reward* which has made an outstanding contribution to increasing the knowledge and skills of health workers throughout rural Nepal.

Technical knowledge serial dramas frequently contain interactive questioning segments that allow the audience to test their acquisition of new learning by answering questions from the program host. *For example*, the host might pose the question, "What instructions would you give a client who forgot to take her oral contraceptive pills two days in a row?" Audience members would be expected to be able to give an immediate oral response, with precise, accurate knowledge.

Both types of Enter-Educate serial dramas (non-technical and technical knowledge programs) require the same degree of rigorous design. This design can begin only after the start-up phase, involving considerable research and analysis, has been completed.

Starting Up the Radio Serial Drama Project

For the creation of radio serial drama, as for the creation of any other product such as a building or an automobile, the stages of development are much the same: from conception to production to testing to refinement and then possible re-design in response to experience, evaluation, and changing needs.
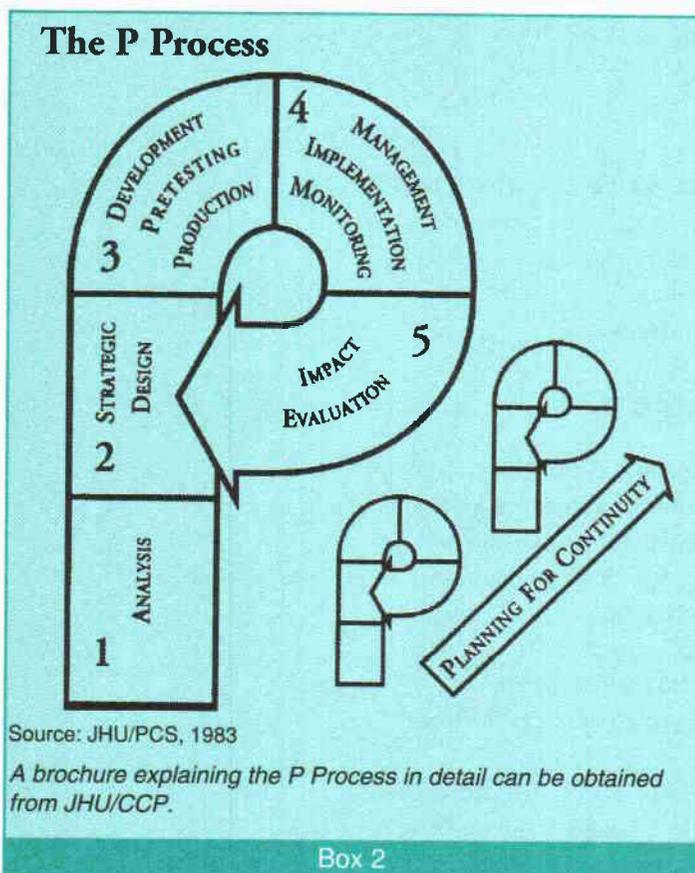
These development stages are shown in a schematic known as the **P Process**. (See Box 2.) The schematic, which was devised by Population Communication Services, Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs in 1983, shows the sequence of the stages. Since its introduction, the P Process schematic has continued—with some refinement—to provide a guide for IEC or health communication strategy development, project implementation, technical assistance, institution building, and training.

The Phases of the P Process

The diagram shows that the five main phases of any health communication project are: 1) analysis, 2) strategic design, 3) development, pretesting, and production, 4) management, implementation, and monitoring, and 5) impact evaluation. This book will deal almost exclusively with phase 2) strategic design, because it is at this phase that special, meticulous care is needed in the preparation of an Enter-Educate serial drama.

The P Process

1 ANALYSIS
2 STRATEGIC DESIGN
3 DEVELOPMENT PRETESTING PRODUCTION
4 MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING
5 IMPACT EVALUATION

PLANNING FOR CONTINUITY

Source: JHU/PCS, 1983

A brochure explaining the P Process in detail can be obtained from JHU/CCP.

Box 2

The strategic design phase, as the diagram indicates, begins only after the satisfactory completion of the **analysis phase**. The analysis phase makes the initial determination of whether a communication intervention is needed and feasible in order to bring about certain behavior changes in a given population group. The analysis phase is carried out by researchers under the direction of a funding organization or ministry, and involves five main activities.

1. Analysis Phase Activities

The following activities are undertaken in the analysis phase of the project:

- **Understanding the problem.** Review thoroughly the existing health and demographic data, survey results, study findings, and any other available relevant data to ensure complete understanding of the basic health, social, or economic problem to be addressed by the project.

- **Knowing the audience.** Study the geographic, demographic, economic, and social factors that shape the behavior of the chosen audience. These factors include differences in knowledge, attitude, practices, and advocacy; in age, literacy, income, fertility, personality, life-style, values; or in other individual and community variables and mass media exposure. Knowing the audience also involves identifying distinct audience segments that are most likely to respond to differing appeals from the serial drama. The importance of constantly listening to and learning from the audience cannot be over-emphasized.

- **Reviewing existing programs and policies.** Review existing health programs and policies to see what is legal and where and what supplies and services are available to assist the audience in reaching project objectives. Identify strengths and weaknesses in service delivery so that communication programs can accentuate the positive, help correct or redirect the negative, and maximize access and quality. Interviewing policy-makers is essential at this stage.

- **Identifying leading organizations.** Identify public or private organizations that have the competence, commitment, clout, coverage, and continuity to carry out or support a communication program. Identify leaders, interested cooperating agencies, and potential corporate and commercial sponsors who can provide continuing support.

- **Assessing community capacity.** Assess the availability, reach, and cost of the media that will be needed for the project: broadcast, print, clinic-based media, and community activities. Identify the communication habits and media access of both primary and secondary audiences.

Once all this information has been collected and collated in the analysis phase and the project leaders are satisfied that they have the information and facilities necessary to establish an IEC project, the design of the components and activities (Phase 2 of the P Process) can begin.

2. Strategic Design of Enter-Educate Serial Drama

Enter-Educate serial dramas have special design requirements that differ from those required by other communication interventions. A rigorous and

thoroughly orchestrated design is essential to ensure the harmonious blending of story and message throughout a number of plots and characters and a continuum of episodes over an extended period of time. Creating successful serial drama calls for a complex mix of specialists (content advisors, writers, reviewers, directors, actors, support and promotional material producers, evaluators, etc.) as well as technical staff (typists, media technicians, monitors, and quite frequently, translators, etc.) over an extended period of time. The success of Enter-Educate serial drama is greatly enhanced by encouraging all involved to employ and rigorously adhere to the proven design approach that is explained in this book.

The Design Approach

The design approach is integral to the success of an Enter-Educate serial drama. It comprises three elements: the **design team**, the **design workshop**, and the **design document**. The design document is the end result of the work done by the design team—a group of advisors, such as media specialists, content advisors and writers—during the design workshop. The design workshop is a designated period of time (usually 5 working days) in which the team meets and works together to compile the design document. The design document is the blueprint that presents, in written form, all the details required by all those involved in the writing, reviewing, production, and evaluation of the serial drama. The particular emphasis of the design document is the detailed spelling out of every item of message information to be given to the audience throughout the story. It is essential that the specification of this information should not be left to the writer alone, but should be determined and agreed upon by all members of the design team working together. The way in which the design team can best work together during and after the design workshop to compile and use the design document constitutes the major subject matter of this book.

Initiating Tasks to Undertake before the Design Workshop

For a radio serial drama project, it will be necessary for the program manager, in advance of the design workshop, to gather information that is essential for the design team to have as they make deliberations about the structure and operation of the serial drama. The program manager should check on the following:

- **Availability of a broadcast station** (government or privately owned). Locate one willing to carry the serial drama.

- **Availability of a broadcast time-slot that is suited to the intended audience.** Airing a serial drama at a time when most people are working is likely to result in a less than favorable degree of behavior change.

- **Availability of a broadcast time-slot covering a sufficient number of weeks or months.** Some preliminary determination should be made with regard to number of weeks or months during which the serial will be heard. A radio serial should run for no fewer than six months (at the rate of one episode a week) and twelve months is preferable if it is to have a positive effect on social development.

- **Production and recording facilities;** either with the government radio station or with an independent production house. (Guidelines for choosing a production house can be found in Chapter 7, The Production Stage.)

- **Writing talent.** (Guidelines for selecting writers can be found in Chapter 5, The Writing Process.)

- **Acting talent.**

- **Resources required by the audience.** *For example,* a project promoting family spacing and limiting should be sure that contraceptive services and products are widely available before advocating their use through a serial drama.

- **Non-Government Organizations (NGOs),** as well as organizations that might be willing to support or promote the serial drama. At the same time, it is wise to determine if these NGOs or other organizations are currently engaged in projects that might replicate, compliment, or contradict the proposed radio project. There is little value in duplicating an existing program. Where complimentary programs exist, it is wise to work on message consistency. If programs are found that appear to be giving contradictory information, it will be necessary to try to effect some type of compromise before going into production.

- **Start-up date determination.** The start-up date should be not less than six months after the inauguration of the project, and in most cases a more realistic goal is twelve months from project commencement to first on-air presentation. It is important for the program manager to have—prior to the design workshop—a start-up date in mind, so that appropriate time lines can be devised.

- **Program duration.** The running time (duration) of each episode may be determined by broadcast slots that the radio station has available. The program manager should be aware of available slots before the design workshop because the time available to run the program can affect the amount of information that can be put in each broadcast.

- **Availability of existing support materials.** The use of several media together is almost always more powerful than using one medium alone. The program manager should check to see if there are print or other materials already available that could be used to support the intended radio serial drama. If such materials do exist, the program manager should make copies of them to share with design workshop participants to ensure message consistency.

Chapter Two

The Design Approach:
The Design Document
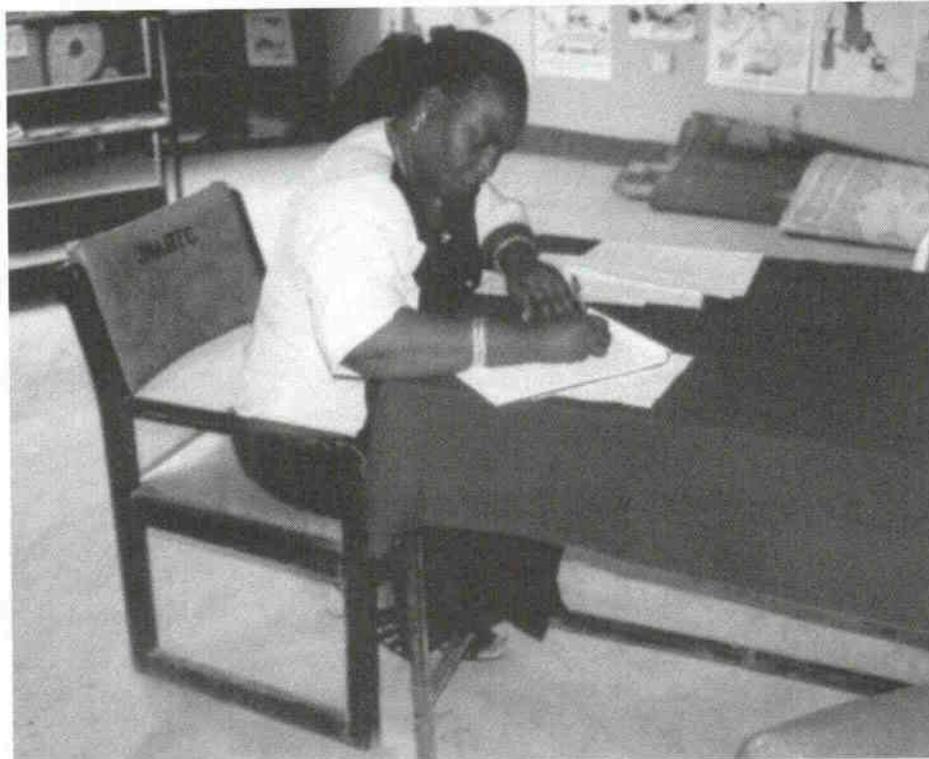
The writer relies on the design document to guide the writing.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The design document for Enter-Educate serial drama**

❖ **Contents of the design document**

❖ **Advantages of the design document**

❖ **What the design document contains**

- Background and overall description segments 1–10
- Specific message content segments 11–14
- Implementation segments 15–20

❖ **The writer's brief**

❖ **Sample table of contents**

The Design Document for Enter-Educate Serial Drama

One major difference between serial drama writing for entertainment purposes alone and serial drama writing for Enter-Educate projects is the role of the writer. Those who write for entertainment purposes are accustomed to having much creative leeway with regard to the story and the characters in it. Writers for Enter-Educate serial drama face the much more daunting challenge of having to blend into their imaginative story, and the lives of their fictional characters, specific details of an educational message. This difference means that where the entertainment writer can work alone, the Enter-Educate writer cannot. The Enter-Educate writer needs to be provided with complete and specific details of the educational message to be blended into the story. The writer should not be left to determine alone the sequence of the messages and the precise words in which the message will be delivered. It is essential that the writer is given every detail of message scope and sequence and the precise words in which important aspects of the message are to be delivered to the chosen audience. It is the design document that provides this information for the writer.

The design document, often more than one hundred typed pages in length, is put together by a team of people who have interest in and knowledge about the project and about such matters as the audience, what the message should say, the medium to be used, and the qualities of good drama. The design team pool their knowledge to determine exactly what

educational messages should be included in the serial drama, the sequence in which these messages should be included, and even the precise words that drama characters should use to express the messages. All of the design team's determinations will be contained in the design document, which becomes the dependable reference for all those involved with the serial.

Contents of the Design Document

The exact content of each design document will vary and depend in part on whether the Enter-Educate serial drama is to be technical or non-technical, and on the audience for which it is intended. Similarly, other variables, such as the number and length of the episodes and the frequency of broadcasts, can affect the document contents. As a rule, however, the design team should make determinations about the aspects of their serial drama that are given in the sample design document contents list (see next page). The final details of some of these components may not be completed within the week of the design workshop, but preliminary discussions and determinations should be made at that time.

Contents of the Design Document

Part 1: Background and overall description

1 **Rationale for and statement of the desired change in behavior** that the project wishes to encourage in the chosen audience

2 Information about the chosen **audience(s)**

3 **Justification of the chosen medium or media**

4 The **overall measurable objective(s)** of the serial

5 The **overall purpose** of the serial

6 The overall **message** and the main **focus** of the message

7 The number of **episodes** in the serial (or programs in the series)

8 The **duration** of each program

9 The **message scope and sequence**

10 The **number of programs** to be devoted to each topic in the message scope

Part 2: Individual episodes or groups of episodes

11 The **measurable objectives** of each individual episode

12 The **purpose** of each individual episode

13 The **precise message content** of each episode

14 A **glossary** of topic-specific words and terms, together with the definitions (and translations) to be used in the scripts. An acronym list should also be included.

Part 3: Implementation

15 The **script review panel** and the **script support team**

16 Listing and description of proposed **support materials**

17 **Promotion plans** and decisions about prizes or other **incentives** that will be provided to encourage the audience to listen and act

18 The **monitoring and evaluation plan**

19 The **time lines** for
  • all phases of script writing, reviewing, recording, editing, and broadcasting
  • all phases of support and promotional material writing and dissemination
  • all phases of evaluation:
    • pilot testing of scripts, support materials, and promotional materials
    • ongoing monitoring
    • summative evaluation

20 **Story treatment and sample episode**

The finished design document may include also a responsibility list (or job description) for each person on the design team. This helps to avoid confusion over chain of command and individual responsibilities. It also may include the names of all those who contributed to the successful completion of the document.

(A full explanation of each component of the design document begins on page 18.)

Advantages of the Design Document

The compilation and use of a detailed design document provides the following assistance and assurances to the communication project:

- **Helps prevent inaccuracies and possibly critical mistakes.** Even the best-intentioned writer creating an Enter-Educate drama without detailed message instructions might include, even if accidentally, information that is either misleading or in fact harmful to the audience. The precise and detailed message information in the design document greatly lowers the chance of this happening.

- **Strengthens the possibility of appropriate audience response.** The design document provides an organized scope and sequence for message presentation, consistency of language and terminology, and a clear delineation of the most appropriate ways in which the message can be made relevant to the chosen audience. These factors greatly enhance the possibility of positive audience response to the desired behavior change.

- **Enhances accurate and timely script review.** The design document provides script reviewers a clear reference against which to measure each episode. Reviewers will know exactly what the objectives, purposes, and message content of each script are, and the way in which the message content should be expressed. The story treatment in the design document also allows reviewers to determine quickly whether or not the story (the entertainment side of the drama) is on track.

- **Saves time and money.** Reviewers, writers, evaluators, and the program manager save a great deal of time, and therefore money, by having the detailed, agreed-upon design document as their guide through every step of the development and evaluation stages. Writers and reviewers need less time to do their job. Therefore, there are less expenditures on re-writing, typing, translation, copying, and material when scripts do not have to be rewritten many times. Production costs also are saved, because working from the design document virtually eliminates the chances of a bad or inaccurate episode having to be re-recorded when its weaknesses are realized.

- **Encourages a sense of confidence and professionalism.** Design team members are asked to commit their beliefs and decisions about the project in writing.

- **Enhances project sustainability.** The existence of a document containing all elements of the project design makes it much easier for the project to be continued or replicated as needed. It also provides a reliable and accurate reference for anyone wanting to check exactly what message will be or has been disseminated by the project.

- **Increases the accuracy and usefulness of evaluation.** By using the design document as their guide, evaluators know exactly what the project is trying to achieve and they can create test instruments that will assess more accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the project.

What the Design Document Contains

Part 1:   the background and overall outline of the serial drama project.

Part 2:   details related to individual episodes or groups of episodes.

Part 3:   details related to the production, presentation, evaluation, and other needs of the series.

Part 1: Background and Overall Description

Segments 1–10:

1. **Rationale for the change in behavior.** This section outlines the justifications for undertaking this particular social development project. For instance, the analysis phase may have found that the prevalence of contraceptive use in a given area is low. Subsequently, the desired behavior change would be to increase couples' knowledge of and willingness to use contraceptive methods. The rationale for this change is to allow couples to control both the spacing of their children and the size of their families. The benefits for the couple include greater opportunities for the health of the mother and the children, more leisure time for all family members, greater educational opportunities for the children, and the chance of better economic security for the family. The community also feels the benefit of child spacing when all children receive better care and more access to education. All those working on the serial drama need to be clear about the rationale for and benefits of the desired behavior change to focus the drama correctly.

2. **Audience profile.** Clearly defining the audience for the serial drama is essential to determine whether a non-technical or technical knowledge approach is required, and to decide on the type of story and characters that will be needed. It is necessary also to know where the audience stands with regard to the desired behavior change, so that the message presentation in the story can follow a reliable behavior change model. (See Box 3.)

   The types of events and characters that the writer includes in the various plots of the drama will vary depending on what is known about where the audience members are in the *Steps to Behavior Change*. For an audience that already has considerable knowledge about contraceptive choices and services, it may not be necessary to provide detailed contraceptive information. It may be necessary, however, to include characters who are in the process of moving from intention to practice. These characters can demonstrate to the audience the wisdom of moving to the "practice" step.

   Similarly, it is important to determine if only one audience requires the message or whether it will be

Steps to Behavior Change

5 Advocacy

4 Practice

3 Intention

2 Approval

1 Knowledge

Box 3
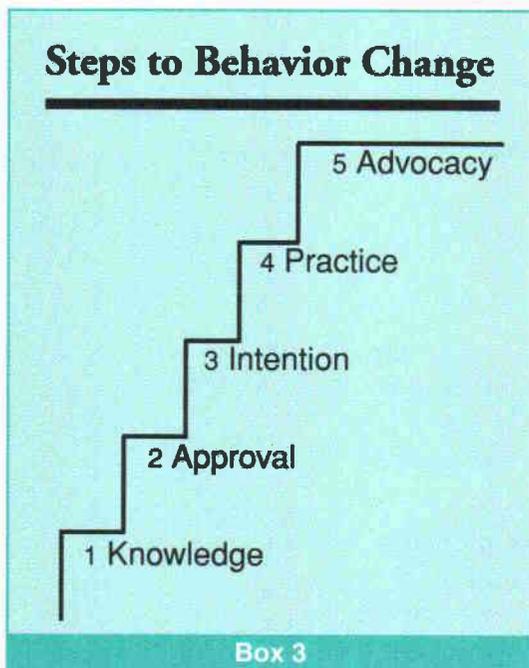
necessary to reach more than one audience. This, in turn, raises the question of whether all audiences can be reached through the same serial drama or whether it will be necessary to devise separate programs for the different audience segments. A serial drama with several plots has a good chance of meeting the needs of several audiences at once.

Initial understanding of the audience can be gained from reviewing research reports that have been prepared in the analysis phase, but it is always necessary for design team members to understand exactly why the members of their audience or audiences are behaving the way they are with regard to the desired practice. While it may seem on the surface that lack of knowledge dictates the continuation of certain behaviors, this is not always the case. For instance, it has been found in some countries that the low prevalence of contraceptive use is due more to belief in unfounded rumors about the effects of contraceptives than to a lack of knowledge of contraceptive techniques. A serial drama might redress some of these fears by including, perhaps, a character who uses well-known proverbs to point out the foolishness of listening to rumors rather than seeking facts.

3. **Justification of the medium and format.** Because every communication medium has its strengths and weaknesses, the design team needs to be clear about their reasons for choosing a particular medium. *For example:* A major reason for choosing radio for Enter-Educate projects is that it has the greatest reach in rural areas. It is also less expensive to produce radio dramas than television dramas and radio can reach an illiterate audience that could not take advantage of print materials. Alternatively, television might be chosen in city and peri-urban areas because it attracts greater attention than radio or print. The design team must believe in the validity of the choice they have made to make it work to their advantage. It is always better to use several media to carry a message, even if the main medium is radio. Consequently, the design team should consider how other media can be used to support the serial drama.

4. **The overall measurable objective of the serial drama.** The statement of overall measurable objective answers the questions, "What does the serial drama hope to achieve?" and "What changes does the drama hope to bring about in the audience's knowledge, attitudes, and practices?" These objectives should be measurable and stated as precisely as possible. It is helpful to check that the objectives are SMART. (See Box 4.)

The design team will use the overall measurable objective of the serial drama as a whole to guide all their deliberations. The overall objective also will be used as the basis for the final evaluation of the project's effectiveness. *For example:* A serial drama in Kenya had the following overall objective: "As a result of this radio serial drama, there will be a measurable increase in the number of people who visit health clinics to

> ## SMART Objectives
>
> - Specific
> - Measurable
> - Appropriate
> - Realistic
> - Time-bound
>
> **Box 4**

inquire about contraceptive services." This objective is measurable, because it is possible to take a count of people coming to the clinics before the serial broadcasts begin. Another count can be taken after the serial, and visitors to the clinic can be asked what inspired them to come. A response that they learned about the clinic or were motivated to come by listening to the drama suggests that the serial affected their behavior. Other variables would have to be examined also, such as influence of friends or family members, but it is possible for the overall objective to be measured.

5. **The overall purpose of the serial drama.** The overall purpose is an explanation of the approach the serial drama will take to bring about the desired changes. Measurable objectives indicate what is expected of the audience; the purpose explains what is expected of the serial drama. The purpose of the serial drama might be singly or collectively to teach, to persuade, to motivate the chosen audience, or to demonstrate certain behaviors. In most cases, the serial drama will require two or more of these purposes. *For example:* The overall purpose of a non-technical serial drama might be to demonstrate the foolishness of believing rumors and to encourage listeners to seek the truth about contraceptive methods and choices. In a technical knowledge distance education series, however, the purpose is likely to be more specific. *For example:* To instruct health workers in the skills of interpersonal communication and counseling, and to encourage them to use these skills with their clients. These very specific statements of purpose help script writers structure a drama that has a real chance of bringing about changes in the personal lives of audience members. A serial drama that has the purpose of instructing will require characters and events quite different from those needed in a serial drama that has the prime purpose of motivating behavior change.

6. **The overall message and message focus.** At this stage, the document records the clear, simple statement of the overall concept that the team has determined the drama should convey. This determination will be a general, overall concept, rather than the precise details that will be determined later. The overall message or concept might be, *for example*, something like this:

> The people of this nation, working individually, within family groups, and within the community, will have a good chance of improving the quality of their lives if they give equal status to men and women (placing genuine emphasis on the special needs of women during pregnancy and childbirth), space and limit their children appropriately, and take care of the environment and natural resources.

Throughout the serial episodes, the overall message will be delivered as smaller, specific messages to help guide the audience in the direction of change. It is helpful, however, for the design team and writer(s) to keep the overall message in mind at all times so that everything in the message and in the story will lead toward the same end.

Every Enter-Educate serial drama requires a particular focus or theme that flavors all the episodes. Every great entertainment drama is based on a universal theme. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, for example is based on the universal theme of love. Similarly, every Enter-Educate serial

drama needs a universal theme or focus that reflects the feeling or attitude the serial would like to stimulate in the audience. *For example:* A serial drama with a main message of the importance of the male role in family planning might focus on pride; the pride that a wife has in her caring husband, and the willingness with which she shows her pride to others in the community. A serial drama designed to increase the knowledge and ability of health workers might put the focus on confident professionalism and express the spirit of professionalism throughout the episodes.

7. **The number of episodes in the serial.** The number of episodes is influenced by several factors: the amount and complexity of the message content, budget considerations, experience of the staff, and available media time. The more frequently the serial is heard, the more likely it is to influence the audience. Ideally, a radio or television serial should be broadcast at the rate of one episode a day, five or six days a week for a period of not less than 12 months. This is usually not a realistic expectation for inexperienced writers and production staff or limited budgets. It should be possible, however, to broadcast one episode a week over a 12-month period. A serial drama that runs for a shorter period (say, six months) might attract immediate attention but is not likely to bring about permanent change. Broadcasting at the rate of one episode every two weeks is not recommended because listeners may lose the thread of the story and forget the message(s).

8. **The duration of each episode.** Decisions on the playing time of each episode are influenced by the availability of "slots" (blocks of broadcasting time, also known as air time) and production costs. Sometimes a project will be given only part of a slot. *For example:* The project might be given only 10 minutes of a weekly 30-minute Ministry of Health magazine program. The program manager should have determined, in advance of the design workshop, just what slots are available for this type of programming so that the team can design the serial drama to fit the time. Other considerations when determining program length include the amount of message information that can fit comfortably and naturally into each serial episode, and the period of uninterrupted time the audience usually devotes to listening to or watching the drama.

9. **The message scope and sequence.** The message scope and sequence can be likened to the table of contents in a book. It outlines the major informational blocks or topics the serial drama will cover and gives the order in which they will be presented. The message scope lists all the topics that must be covered between the first and the last episode of the serial. For a technical knowledge serial, the message scope is likely to be more complex than for a non-technical serial, but for both types of programs the message scope must be determined carefully to ensure that all of the information the audience is likely to need is covered in the drama episodes.

The message sequence shows the order in which the information will be presented. For a technical knowledge serial the sequence is listed

episode by episode. For a non-technical serial, both the message sequence and the scope often are listed in blocks of episodes. In both cases, the message scope and sequence can be determined only when the team has a thorough knowledge of the audience's current attitudes toward and knowledge of the desired behavior change, and where the audience stands on the *Steps to Behavior Change*. The writer must know and use the scope and sequence in order to design the plots, actions, and characters of the story in a way that allows the message to blend in naturally, gradually, and subtly. (See Appendix, page 140 for examples of the Scope and Sequence listing for a non-technical serial drama, and for a technical knowledge serial drama.)

In determining message scope and sequence, the design team should remember the importance of distributed learning. Distributed learning means distributing throughout the serial repeats of concepts that must be learned and remembered by the listening audience. The system of distributed learning ensures that new concepts, once introduced, are repeated or at least referred to in later episodes of the serial.

10. **The number of episodes devoted to each part of the message.** The number of episodes required for each topic of the message is usually determined at the same time as the sequence. Again, a thorough knowledge of the audience and the subject matter is necessary for the team so that they can determine which parts of the message can be covered lightly and which will require a slower, more thorough, repetitive approach. It is also important to determine at this time if a certain number of episodes should be set aside for summary programs or for listeners' question and answer programs. It is often helpful to set aside every tenth episode for special programs of this nature.

Part 2: Specific Message Content

Segments 11–14

Part 2 of the design document deals with individual episodes or groups of episodes. As with the series as a whole, so with each episode or episode group, the team must designate stated measurable objectives and specific purpose(s). At the same time, the team must spell out in precise detail what part of the message content is to be included in each episode (for technical knowledge serials) or group of episodes (for non-technical knowledge serials). It is essential for writers to know exactly what messages to include as the story develops, including the exact words and definitions they must use for specific parts of the message. Without this information, it is virtually impossible for writers to create serial dramas that will both appeal to and influence the behavior of the audience. (Note that while objectives, purpose and content are shown as separate items of the design document content list they are usually worked out together for each episode or episode group. The sample in Appendix C on page 141 shows how this information can be laid out in the design document.)

11. **The measurable objectives of each episode or episode group.** The objectives, which again must be SMART objectives, will be presented differently for a non-technical and a technical knowledge serial drama. Non-technical programs frequently present measurable objectives for groups of episodes rather than for individual episodes and express these objectives in motivational rather than knowledge-specific terms. *For example:* The measurable objectives for the first five episodes of a non-technical drama might be expressed as follows:

Non-Technical Serial Drama

Episodes #1-5

Objectives:	From listening to episodes 1–5, the audience will
KNOW:	that it is possible for a couple to plan together how many children they will have, and how much time will elapse between the birth of one child and the conception of the next.
	that health, economic, and educational advantages can be gained from a small, spaced family.
	that decisions on family size and spacing should be made by husband and wife together.
DO:	begin to discuss family planning with their spouses.
ATTITUDE:	begin to experience an increase of positive feelings toward family planning.

The statement of objectives is followed by the purpose statement to show the approach these episodes will take to assist the audience to reach the objectives. Following the purpose statement, the message content for the episode is spelled out in detail. (See Design Document sample in Appendix C, page 139.)

For a technical knowledge serial drama, however, the document will list specific objectives for each episode to reflect the audience's requirements. *For example:*

Technical Knowledge Serial Drama

Episode #25

Objectives:	After this episode, health workers will
KNOW:	that the Intrauterine Device (IUD) is a long-term temporary modern contraceptive method for women.
	that only specially trained health workers can insert and remove the IUD.
	how to explain to clients how the IUD acts in the woman's body to prevent pregnancy.
	how to explain to clients the advantages and special considerations of the IUD.
DO:	explain to clients, in a simple way, how the IUD acts in the body to prevent pregnancy.
	explain to clients thoroughly and simply the advantages and special considerations of the IUD.
ATTITUDE:	feel confident of their ability to explain to clients how the IUD works, and to counsel clients about its advantages and special considerations.

The statement of objectives is followed by the purpose statement to show the approach the episode will take to assist the audience to reach the objectives. Following the purpose statement, the message content for the episode is spelled out in detail. (See Design Document sample in Appendix C, page 139.)

12. **The purpose of each episode or episode group.** The purpose defines the approach the episode will take in order to encourage appropriate changes in audience behavior. The approach may be
   - to educate
   - to demonstrate
   - to motivate
   - to reinforce
   - to encourage, etc.

Sometimes one episode or episode group might have two purposes: *For example:* To teach and to motivate. Again, non-technical and technical knowledge serial dramas might require different types of purpose statements. For a non-technical serial designed to motivate rather than instruct, the document might present one purpose statement for a block of episodes. The technical knowledge serial drama requires a separate purpose statement for each episode.

Non-Technical Serial Drama

Episodes 1–5

Purpose: The purposes of these episodes are:

- to introduce the serial story and its characters in an exciting way so that the audience will be motivated to continue listening,
- to introduce the concept that planning one's family offers the potential of real advantages,
- to outline the advantages to be gained by planning the family.

Technical Knowledge Serial Drama

Episode #25

Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to explain and demonstrate to health workers how to help clients understand the function of the Intrauterine Device (IUD) in preventing pregnancy, its advantages, and the special considerations to take into account when using it.

13. **Precise message content of each episode or episode group.** In providing the message content for each episode or group of episodes, the design document gives the precise information and the specific words and explanations the writer must use in presenting the message. The wording and content of the message should not be the responsibility of the writer alone. It is up to the design team to provide the writer—in the design document—the exact wording and order of the message.

In preparing messages for both non-technical and technical knowledge serial dramas, the design team must be sure that every message is:

- correct
- complete
- clear
- concise
- consistent

Design team members must ask themselves, *"How can we word this particular message concept so that it will be expressed correctly by a writer who has no prior knowledge of the subject, and so that it will be understood by audience members who have either little knowledge of or little interest in the subject?"* The design team will need to spend considerable time together determining exactly how the message must be expressed in each episode or group of episodes and ensuring that every message that is used more than once is expressed consistently.

Like the objectives and purpose, the message content for non-technical dramas might be presented for episode blocks, but the content of a technical knowledge serial drama must be spelled out separately for each episode.

Non-Technical Serial Drama

Episodes 1–5

Following the statement of the objectives and the purpose statement, the design document will continue with the following:

Content:

While establishing the story and the characters, these five episodes will introduce and demonstrate the following information:

1. One of the major contributing factors to a pleasant life is a small family with the children **spaced** at least three years apart.
2. A family of no more than two or three children has a better chance than a larger family of achieving a **quality life** that includes:
   - sufficient resources to live on;
   - education for each of the children;
   - healthy living for all members of the family (including the mother); and
   - leisure time for mother and father.
3. A couple can determine how many children they will have and how far apart they will have them. They can obtain help from the local family planning clinic to find out what they can do to control family spacing and size.
4. A couple should make all decisions regarding the number and spacing of their children together.

2

Technical Knowledge Serial Drama

Episode #25

Following the statement of objectives and the purpose statement, the design document will continue with the following:

Content:

Remind health workers of the importance of covering all essential points in discussing modern contraceptive methods with their clients (Re-list the points in Episode #13.)

Suggest that the health worker explain the IUD in these terms:

The IUD is a long-acting reversible modern contraceptive method for women. It is a small device made of plastic and copper, and is inserted into the woman's uterus by a specially trained health worker.

How does it work? The health worker can explain as follows:

The IUD prevents pregnancy by stopping the male sperm from reaching the female egg.

The IUD will prevent pregnancy in this way for up to ten years.

What are the advantages? The health worker should list the advantages of the IUD while counseling the client:

- The IUD is very effective.
- The IUD is immediately effective, providing long-term protection for up to 10 years.
- Women usually can become pregnant soon after the IUD is removed.
- No extra supplies are needed by the client.
- It can be used by breast-feeding women.
- It is convenient and does not interfere with intercourse.

What are the special considerations that the health worker should explain to the client? The health worker should explain these possible special considerations while counseling the client:

- The IUD requires trained staff to insert and remove.
- The woman must check the string after every menstrual period to make sure the IUD is still in place.
- The IUD may come out of the uterus through the cervical canal and be expelled into the vagina. This is not common, and usually happens within the first month after insertion. It should be stressed that the IUD cannot move anywhere else in the body.
- The woman cannot discontinue use on her own.
- IUD users with a recent history of Sexually Transmitted Dieseases (STDs), and those who have multiple sex partners, have a greater risk of pelvic infection.
- The IUD may increase bleeding and cramping during the first few months of use.

(Note that the episode quoted above — episode #25 — is only one of three episodes devoted to giving information about the IUD. Other facts about the IUD, such as possible side effects and where a client should go to have an IUD inserted or removed, are discussed in other episodes.)

14. **Glossary.** The glossary acknowledges the importance of consistency in message presentation. Information is easier to retain and use if it is explained in the same words each time it is presented. The glossary provides the writer with the precise definitions and explanations to use for words and terminology that might be unfamiliar to the audience. Definitions should be simple and appropriate to the audience.

For example: Permanent contraceptive methods can be defined as "those methods that are used only when a husband and wife are perfectly sure that they will want no more children at any time in the future." Whenever the phrase "permanent contraceptive methods" is used in the design document it is followed by an asterisk (*) so the script writer knows to look in the glossary for the definition or words that must be used in discussing this aspect of the topic.

An acronym list can follow the glossary, if necessary. This list spells out in full (and in translation where required) all acronyms used in the document. (A glossary and acronym sample is included on pages 147 and 148.)

Part 3: Implementation Segments

Segments 15–20

This section of the design document contains information that the design team compiles on important aspects of the project, other than message content. Some segments of part 3 of the design document may not be completed within the time limit of the design workshop, but it is valuable to have design team members discuss these points together and make initial decisions about them.

15. **The Script Review Panel and Script Support Team.** Publishers employ proofers to check manuscripts for inadvertent errors and inconsistencies before they are printed. Even the most famous authors acknowledge the need for and value of proofreading. In the same way, every episode of every Enter-Educate serial drama written for social development purposes should be reviewed for consistency and accuracy. For this purpose, the design team will nominate a **script review panel** that comprises a few members of the design team who will review each script for adherence to the design document and to the spirit and intentions of the series. Ideally, this group is made up of no more than five people: the program manager, the media director, a content specialist, a drama script evaluator, and, where necessary, a representative of the relevant ministry. It also may be necessary to have a language specialist on the panel in those countries that require all broadcasts to be given in the official national language. If it is necessary to ensure that the programs are acceptable to the broadcast station, the panel also may include a representative of the station, unless the media director is employed by the radio station and knows the policies.

The completed design document should list a **script support team:** the names of members of the design team who can provide advice during the script writing process. Although script writers are present throughout the design workshop and have the design document as a detailed guide, sometimes questions arise during writing that only an expert can answer. The support team, therefore, is made up of the following members of the design team: program manager, content specialist, media director, evaluator, researcher, and representatives of both the audience and the relevant ministry or government. Not all of these people will be needed by the writer at the same time, and some of them may not be called upon by the writer at any time. It is important, however, that the writer knows the people to call when help is needed, and that these people will be available when needed.

16. **Support materials.** A communication campaign is more effective when more than one medium is involved. While the goal of a radio serial drama is to convey the message clearly on its own, the design team should consider what other materials might be included in the project. (In the case of distance learning, *for example* a text or reference book will be included.) The nature of materials is determined during the design workshop and may include items such as brochures, flyers, and the addresses of places where listeners can obtain further information on the recommended behavior change. (Guidelines on the preparation of support materials can be found in Chapter 5, The Writing Process.)

17. **Promotion plans.** The promotion plans determine how the radio or television series will be publicized, and they should be created as far in advance as possible. Promotional spots that highlight a few exciting lines from the serial's episodes are often effective. If they have been planned in advance, these spots can be recorded easily at the same time as the episodes. Promotion plans may include prizes or other incentives that also need to be considered as early as possible, so that the script writer can include references to any competitions and prizes in the announcer's remarks at the end of the episode. (Guidelines on the preparation of promotional materials can be found in Chapter 5, The Writing Process).

18. **The monitoring and evaluation plan.** The evaluation plan is included in the design document so that all those involved in the serial drama can understand what has to be done to assess the project's success. To gain a full understanding of the program, evaluators participate in at least the first stages of the design workshop. Their participation allows them to understand how the drama is designed and what it is intended to do. Working with this information, they can complete the monitoring and evaluation plan outside the design workshop and submit it for inclusion in the design document.

19. **The time lines.** The time lines set out in detail the dates by which each activity of the drama creation and production must be completed. The time lines can be grouped under three main headings:
    - The script writing, reviewing, production, and broadcast time line
    - The support and promotional materials time line
    - The testing, monitoring, and evaluation time line

The time lines may not be completed within the design workshop, but when finished, they should be recorded in the design document, so that all those involved in the project know what is expected of them. A sample script time line for the 10 weeks from the start of scripting to audio production is included on page 59.

20. **Story treatment and sample episode.** The program manager requests a full story treatment or synopsis from script writers immediately after the design workshop. This treatment outlines the plots of the episodes and the major characters to be included, and shows how the message will be incorporated. The review panel reviews the story treatment; once the panel gives its approval, the writer is asked to create a sample episode in dramatic form. The episode also can be reviewed by the panel before inclusion in the design document. (Examples of a treatment and a sample episode are included in the companion volume to this book, *How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Guide.*)

The Writer's Brief

Ideally, script writers should receive a copy of the complete design document before they begin to write. Completion of the entire design document can take some time, however, so a Writer's Brief can be prepared immediately at the close of the design workshop that will allow writers to begin their work as soon as possible. The Writer's Brief is a short version of the design document and must contain the specific information listed in Box 5 (numbers 1–15, 19, and 20).

The Writer's Brief

1. Rationale for and statement of the desired change in behavior
2. Audience profile
3. Justification of the chosen medium
4. Overall measurable objectives
5. Overall purpose statement
6. Overall message and focus
7. Number of episodes in the series
8. The duration of each episode
9. Message scope and sequence
10. Number of episodes to be devoted to each topic in the message scope
11. Measurable objectives of individual episodes or groups of episodes
12. Purpose statements of individual episodes or groups of episodes
13. Precise message content of each episode or group of episodes
14. Glossary
15. Script support panel

The Writer's Brief does not include steps 16 through 18

19. Time line script preparation and review
20. Story treatment and sample episode

Box 5

Sample Table of Contents

The contents of the completed design document can be arranged as required by those working on the project, but a completed table of contents for a radio serial drama design document typically will contain the following:

Signatories (See page 51.)

Preamble or Foreword

Design Team Member List

Job Descriptions

Rationale for Project

Overall Measurable Objectives of Serial

Overall Purpose of Serial

Overall Message and Message Focus

Episode Topics (by number)

Episode Topics (by sequence)

Special Instructions to Writer(s)

Individual or Group Episode Listing:

- measurable objectives and purpose

- detailed message content

Glossary, Acronym List

Script Review Panel and Script Support Team

Episode Format and Story Synopsis (Treatment)

Sample Script

Support Materials Description

Promotional Plans

Time Line

Evaluation Plans

Chapter Three

The Design Approach:
The Design Team

Members of the design team work closely together.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The need for the design team**

❖ **Advantages of the design team**

❖ **Design team members**

The Need for the Design Team

Drama that is intended purely for entertainment can be created by one writer working alone. Enter-Educate drama, as explained in the previous chapter, is quite different from pure entertainment drama. A team, rather than a writer alone, is needed to design and guide the serial drama that is intended for social development purposes. Having a design team whose members work closely together offers many advantages to the project.

Advantages of the Design Team

- **The team can provide a more thorough consideration** of all aspects of the proposed serial drama. Various team members bring differing perspectives and aspects of information to the project. All of these perspectives need to be considered and reconciled in order to present consistent and correct information to the chosen audience.
- **Continuous formative evaluation** is ensured from the outset by the involvement of a team of resource people such as the content specialists and the audience representatives.
- **Settlement of differences of opinion** about such important matters as government policy, production standards, and cultural appropriateness can be effected harmoniously by consultation among team members. This prevents the occurrence of major stumbling blocks during writing and production, or the demand that the serial be pulled from the air because it is considered inappropriate or offensive by someone who was not consulted in the early stages.
- **Gaps in knowledge can be identified and redressed in a timely fashion.** It may be found during the design workshop that certain information about such matters as audience practices is insufficiently understood. Steps can be undertaken at this stage to have design team members fill in the knowledge gaps so that when scripts are written they do not mislead, insult, or confuse the audience.
- **A team approach can shorten and sharpen the script writing process.** The writers understand from their involvement in the design team exactly what the serial drama is intended to achieve, and

Main Advantage of a Team

**Together
Everyone
Achieves
More**

Box 6

how best to express the ideas to the chosen audience. They do not have to spend time looking for information to include in the drama. The writing process is sharpened because the writers will have a clear understanding of the need for the communication intervention and a full realization of factors that have made it difficult for the audience to adopt the proposed behavior in the past. Writers also have access to a support team (chosen from the design team) who are familiar with and in agreement with the design document.

- **Fast and reliable script review** is achieved as a result of the work of the design team. All those on the review panel are members of the design team and have first-hand understanding of the project's intention. In creating the design document together, team members help establish the guidelines from which all scripts and support materials should be reviewed.
- **Evaluation accuracy is enhanced** because evaluators have been contributing members of the design team from the outset and know what to measure.

The Design Team Members

The design team comprises the people needed to make essential decisions related to the content and presentation of the radio serial drama. Design team members should:

- have a belief in and sincere dedication to the aims of the project,
- be available—barring unforeseen circumstances—throughout the duration of the design and development stages of the project,
- be committed to their responsibilities as team members, and
- have the backing and support of their supervisors throughout their involvement with the project.

The program manager should ensure that all those who have a stake in the project are represented on the team.

The make-up of the team and the number of its members will differ depending on the local culture, the nature of the project, and the organizations to be involved with it. Typically, a design Team includes the following people:

1. **Program Manager.** The program manager heads up the team, leads the design workshop, is responsible for organization of all aspects of the serial drama creation and production, and keeps the project on track. The program manager's work begins with setting up and running the design workshop and includes: ensuring that decisions made by the team are acceptable and practical under the terms of the overall project; that every item in the design document is fully and thoroughly explored by the team; and that team members reach agreement on most details.

The Design Team Members

Program Manager

Funding Agency Representative

Content Specialists

Audience Representatives

Ministry Representatives

Broadcast Outlet Representative

NGO and Donor Agency
    Representatives

Script Writer(s)

Resource Representative

Media Director

Researcher/Evaluator

Support Materials Writer

Promotions Manager

2. **Funding Agency Representative.** Someone in a position of authority with the funding agency—perhaps the Project Director or Country Representative—who can make decisions on behalf of the funding agency with regard to policy and commitment of resources. Sometimes this role will be filled by the program manager. This team member has the responsibility of ensuring that all decisions made by the design team are within the financial capability of the project.

3. **Content Specialists.** Generally, it is advisable to have at least two content specialists on the team. They should be people who are local, recognized authorities in the subject area to be addressed by the project. A family planning project, *for example*, should have as content specialists people who are currently working locally in the area of family planning (training, policy making, managing a family planning project, etc.). In almost every content area, such as family planning and reproductive health, there are differences of opinion on what actions should be taken in certain circumstances or on how particular ideas should be expressed. The presence of at least two content specialists on the team will help to ensure that these differences are discovered and that acceptable compromises are reached. Occasionally, it may be necessary to bring one or two extra content advisors into the workshop temporarily as special needs arise. The content specialists will be responsible for ensuring the absolute accuracy and appropriateness of all message content to be included in the serial drama.

4. **Audience Representatives.** These should be people who work closely with the chosen audience in the subject area that the broadcasts will address. *For example:* In a serial drama that aims to encourage wider acceptance of family planning methods among a largely rural audience, the audience representative might be a rural health worker. The audience representatives should have an understanding of local traditional beliefs and know what current misunderstandings and personal fears might be standing between the audience members and the acceptance of the new behaviors. Audience representatives also can give advice and guidance about the language and terminology that is most likely to be understood by and acceptable to the chosen audience. Audience representative team members will be responsible for ensuring that the serial drama and its contents have the best possible chance of appealing to and appropriately influencing the chosen audience.

5. **Ministry Representatives.** Many, if not most, development communication projects, including those related to family planning, involve at least one host country ministry (the Ministry of Health in the case of family planning projects). It is essential that every ministry that is involved in or will be affected by the project be represented on the design team. These representatives should be people well acquainted with the policies of their ministries and have the authority to speak on behalf of the ministries on matters of policy. *For example*, in some countries, it is the policy of the Ministry of Health to recommend that a woman should not marry until she is 20 years of age. The messages in the serial drama, therefore, should reflect this policy and promote the same

recommendations. It is the responsibility of the ministry representatives on the team to ensure that nothing is included in the message content that could be criticized at a later date as contravening ministry policies.

6. **Broadcast Outlet Representative.** The team should include a representative of the broadcast station that will air the serial drama; someone who knows broadcast station policy and can speak on behalf of station management. The team needs to know, *for example*, whether there are any broadcast restrictions on the discussion of matters related to sex, birth, and adolescent development. The broadcast outlet representative should have knowledge of audience likes and dislikes with regard to radio programming, and must take responsibility for ensuring that the serial drama will not be pulled from the air because it contravenes broadcast policy in any way.

7. **NGO and Donor Agency Representatives.** NGOs and donor agencies working in the same or a similar field to the project should be represented on the design team. Their involvement can cut down on competition or animosity among organizations. It is also possible that another agency will be able to assist the project in some way—perhaps through the distribution of resources or materials. It is always valuable to enhance cooperation with other organizations and NGOs carrying out projects in a related field.

8. **Script Writer(s).** The involvement of the script writer from the very outset of the design process is extraordinarily beneficial, allowing the writer a much deeper understanding and appreciation of the message to be disseminated. Presence on the design team also allows the writer to become personally acquainted with the members of the script review panel and the script support team, which encourages a much closer working relationship. The script writer has the enormous responsibility of blending all the message content needs into a story that will capture and hold the attention of the audience. If the writer's responsibility is to be met, then it is clear that all other team members must uphold their responsibilities faithfully. (Guidelines for selecting a writer for an Enter-Educate serial drama are included in Chapter 5, The Writing Process.)

9. **Resource Representative.** Some IEC projects for social development— such as those containing family planning messages—rely for their success on the availability of needed resources as much as they rely on the effective communication of a message. It can be useful, therefore, to invite a **resource representative** to attend at least part of the design workshop, as a visitor if not as a team member. The resource representative might be a government supplier, or a private entrepreneur who is interested in supporting the broadcast drama by ensuring resource supplies at the appropriate time. *Where a resource representative is included in the team, he or she must take responsibility for ensuring that the listening audience is not prevented from reaching the desired project objectives because the needed resources are not available.*

10. **Media Director.** The person who will be in charge of directing the performance and recording of the drama should be a member of the

design team to contribute invaluable guidance about the capabilities and limitations of the chosen medium, about the type of programming that currently attracts the chosen audience, and about the availability of local talent. Presence on the design team will help the director to understand that Enter-Educate production is a team effort and that the director cannot make changes to the script or to its interpretation without reference to the program manager. The media director will take both artistic and logistical responsibility for the recording and broadcast activities of the project.

11. **Researcher/Evaluator.** It is valuable for the team to have the input of one of the researchers who worked with the analysis phase of the project. While printed reports on the findings of the research team can be made available, these are never as valuable as personal comments and anecdotes from someone who took part in the initial audience research. The evaluator also can assist in the framing of the measurable objectives of the project, and in the determination of ways in which the outcomes of the drama project can be monitored and measured effectively. The researcher/evaluator takes on the responsibilities of ensuring that the project objectives are realistic and of recommending ways in which both the message and the story can enhance audience potential for reaching these objectives.

12. **Support Materials Writer.** If it is known at the outset that new support materials will have to be created, then the person overseeing their creation must be part of the design team and be present when design decisions are being made. It is essential that message information contained in the support materials be consistent with that in the drama episodes. It can happen, too, that ideas from the support materials writer can be incorporated advantageously into the program scripts. The support materials writer is responsible for ensuring the compatibility of the radio serial drama and the support materials, and for ensuring that support materials are produced on time and up to standards.

13. **Promotions Manager.** In some large IEC projects, there is one person designated to handle promotions for all activities. In such a case, this person should be included as a member of the design team and should participate in the design workshop. The Enter-Educate serial drama is likely to attract more attention if all aspects of it—the script, the support materials, and the promotional materials—express the same ideas and have the same approach. As with support materials design, there is always the possibility that a promotional idea that comes up during the design team discussions can be incorporated to enhance the scripts. The promotions manager has the responsibility of finding ways to attract and hold the attention of the audience, both with regard to the radio serial drama and to the overall aims and objectives of the project. In many projects, two or more of the design team roles might be filled by one person. *For example*, the support materials writer might also fill the role of promotions manager.

The role of the design team members should be recognized, both in the permanent record of the design document, and in press releases and other promotional materials. In order to encourage team member dedication to the project, the program manager can hold a short pre-workshop meeting with team members to advise them of the national importance of the project and to explain to them what will be expected of them as team members. During this advance meeting, the program manager can provide team members with suggestions about the types of materials and information it would be helpful for them to bring with them to the design workshop. The following list indicates the type of information each team member should bring:

1. **Program Manager.** Information about project intentions and aims; project duration and limitations; available resources and staff; work done to date (overview of analysis phase).

2. **Funding Agency Representative.** Budget allowances and restrictions; time lines and limitations for project development.

3. **Content Specialists.** All printed technical knowledge relevant to the topic of the project. *For example*, content specialists for a family planning program should bring with them the latest accurate information on the contraceptive methods locally available; also any print materials currently used by health workers in the field or in the clinic, so that information to be included in the programs can be made consistent with what is already in print. All information brought to the design workshop must be up-to-date, and must reflect any relevant and current government policies.

4. **Audience Representatives.** As much knowledge as possible about current audience attitudes and practices related to the project topic; information about common language and terminology that is used by the audience with regard to the topic; information about current misunderstandings, rumors, and beliefs; information about audience preferences in entertainment.

5. **Ministry Representatives.** Must bring up-to-date information about ministry policies (preferably from printed sources) related to the topic of the project.

6. **Broadcast Outlet Representative.** Must be able to inform the team (preferably from printed sources) of any policies relating to the topic. *For example*, some broadcast outlets have very strict guidelines for the discussion of anything related to sex.

7. **NGO and Donor Agency Representatives.** Information about projects in which they are currently engaged which might complement or be complemented by the radio serial drama; information about the precise message being delivered by these agencies so that contradictions can be avoided by the new project and consistency can be enhanced.

8. **Script Writer(s).** An awareness of the type of drama currently appreciated by the chosen audience; an open mind and a willingness to learn about the topic.

9. **Resource representative.** Up-to-date information on current and future availability of the resources needed by the audience to meet the project objectives.

10. **Media Director.** Information about availability and costs of actors, recording studios, equipment, and technicians; estimation of possible training needs for actors or technical staff.

11. **Researcher/Evaluator.** Information (written or in overhead presentation form) from the analysis phase giving evidence of current attitudes and practices of audience, together with some personal anecdotes from the field during the research phase.

12. **Support Materials Writer.** Information about existing support materials in the topic area; information about ideas for and possible costs of various types of new support materials.

13. **Promotions Manager.** Promotional ideas, suggestions, and possible costs.

Chapter Four

The Design Approach:
The Design Workshop
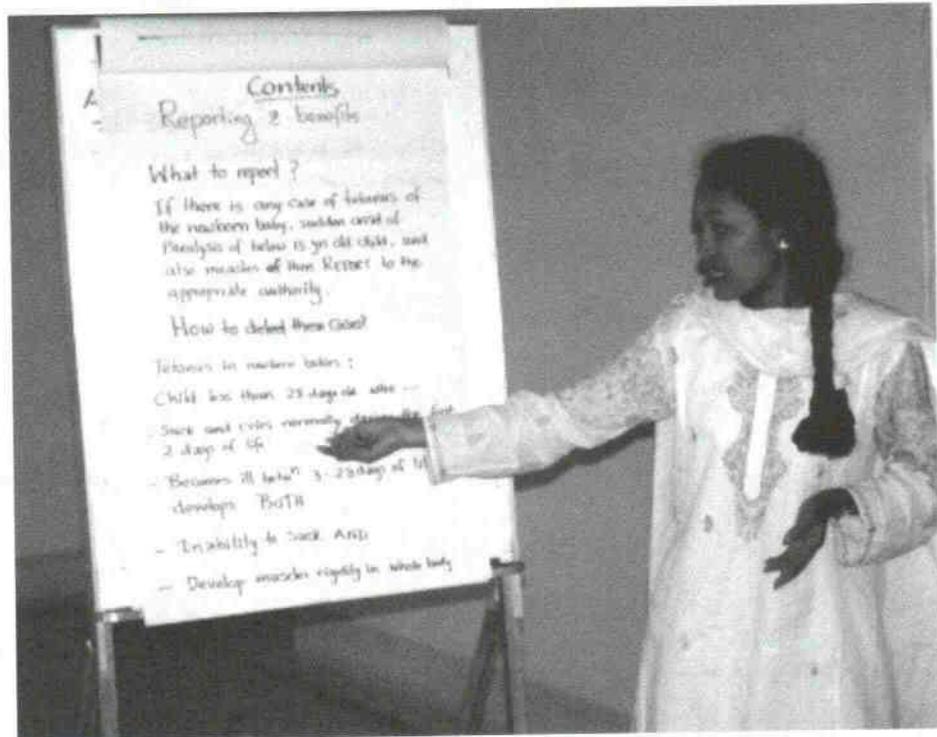
The design workshop is the decision-making venue.

Topics in This Chapter

- ❖ **The design workshop**
- ❖ **Tasks to be accomplished prior to the design workshop**
- ❖ **The design workshop in progress**
- ❖ **Guiding workshop discussion**
- ❖ **The design workshop time line**
- ❖ **Small working group guidelines**
- ❖ **After the design workshop—completing the design document**

The Design Workshop

The design workshop is the crucial element of the design approach because it is the meeting at which all decisions related to the shape and substance of the serial drama must be made. Consensus must be reached on all details of the educational side of the Enter-Educate serial (the messages), and all logistical details such as the writing and production time line. The success of the design workshop determines the success of the serial drama project. The outcome of the design workshop will be the draft version of the design document, the blueprint on which all future activities of the project will be based, and without which the writer cannot begin to work.

For a serial from 26 to 52 episodes, the design workshop usually will occupy a full week. It is always preferable for the team to meet for one continuous week rather than try to create the design document during a series of separated meetings. It is imperative that the design workshop run smoothly and that all participants have the opportunity to contribute fully. *For the design workshop to be as successful as possible, there are a number of tasks the program manager must complete in advance.* All activities of the analysis phase must be completed and documented, as must the list of start-up activities that relate particularly to the initiation of radio serial drama. (See Chapter 1, page 8.) The results of all these investigations should be compiled in a manner that can be shared readily with design team members at the beginning of the design workshop. Then there are several tasks to be undertaken that relate to the workshop itself.

Tasks to be Accomplished Prior to the Design Workshop

1. **Appoint the workshop leader.** Usually, the program manager will head up the workshop personally. If this is not possible or appropriate, then a leader must be appointed who is experienced in workshop operation and knowledgeable about the project and has the necessary time to devote to the task. The program manager can assist the leader with workshop organization and management.

2. **Determine the dates and duration of the workshop.** It is helpful to plan the dates several months in advance so that participants, when chosen, can be given preliminary advance notice early. Follow-up reminders should be sent one month prior to the date, and then again a week or so before the opening day of the workshop.

3. **Locate and reserve the venue.** The design workshop venue should be a comfortable meeting place with facilities for small-group work. Using an out-of-town location can be an advantage because it dissuades team members from absenting themselves to attend to their regular office business. It is advisable to visit the chosen site in advance of the workshop to ensure its suitability.

4. **Invite the chosen team members.** The invitation should be made through the department head of the appropriate ministry or organization rather than on a personal basis, although it is advantageous to be able to recommend a particular person by name. The invitation should be given in writing and be accompanied by a brief explanation of the project to be undertaken, the goals to be achieved, and the importance of the design team and the design workshop.

5. **Organize workshop resources.** Each team member will require writing paper and a writing instrument. A plentiful supply of flip chart paper also is needed, together with flip chart pens, and a place and means to hang completed sheets. As decisions are made on the various aspects of the design document, they can be written down and displayed where they can be seen by the team members, and revised quickly and easily as changes are made. Flip chart paper is more adaptable to this creative process than are overhead transparencies because several flip chart sheets can be displayed side by side for information comparison, whereas overhead transparencies can be shown only one at a time. A chalk board is altogether too limited because of its size, and the fact that information must be erased before more can be written up.

6. **Prepare reference materials.** Make copies of all necessary reference books, manuals, audio tapes, and videos that will be needed in the workshop location. Be sure that reference materials are up-to-date and are approved by the participating ministries and content specialists.

(Reference materials usually can be obtained from the participating ministries and content specialists.) If materials have already been created for other parts of the overall IEC project, copies of these also must be available for the team. Any support materials, such as existing text books and brochures that might be useful, should also be available for the design workshop.

7. **Prepare design document samples.** Samples such as those at the end of this book—should be copied so that they can be made available to share with participants who are new to the design experience. It is helpful to have available at least one complete design document sample that team members can review at their leisure.

8. **Prepare content information pages.** Design team members will be working in small groups to complete the message content for individual episodes or groups of episodes. They will need copies of a "content information" page on which they can record the decisions they make with regard to the content for each episode or group of episodes. A sample of such a content information page is shown opposite.

9. **Prepare a project overview.** Give a brief outline of information relating to:

   - the funding agency
   - the analysis phase work that has already been accomplished to ensure the appropriateness of the project
   - the overall aim of the project and the intended audience
   - the work to be accomplished by the design team, i.e., the design document content list.

   This overview should also contain all the information that the program manager compiled during the initiating tasks period. (See above.) If time and resources are not available to allow for the preparation of a printed project overview, this can be presented orally or with the use of an overhead projector in the opening session of the design workshop.

10. **Arrange secretarial assistance.** A secretary or scribe is needed to take notes on decisions made during the design workshop. The quickest approach is to enter all final decisions into a computer as they are made. Where a computer is not available, notes can be taken on a typewriter or even with a pencil and paper, to be transcribed later to a typewriter or computer. Notes also can be transcribed from the completed flip chart sheets.

Sample Content Information Page:

(Each working group during the design workshop will need as many as five of these sheets)

Episode #_____ Topic _____

_____ of _____ for this topic

Measurable Objectives:

After this episode (or group of episodes), the audience will

KNOW:

DO:

HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF:

Purpose: the purpose(s) of this episode is (are):

Content:

Glossary words/definitions:

As these sheets are completed by the working groups, they will be handed to the team leader to review and then the information will be typed into the completed design document.

The Design Workshop in Progress

The slogan for a well-run design workshop might well be, "Leave no stone unturned." The aim of the workshop is to ensure that all questions have been answered and all necessary information determined, agreed upon, and entered into the design document. The workshop leader should remember, therefore, that the emphasis of the design workshop should be on questioning. All participants should be encouraged to consider everything being discussed with a questioning mind. Assumptions which seem logical on the surface often are found, upon closer scrutiny, to be unfounded at best, or misguided at worst. *For example:* During a design workshop in Nepal, it was assumed that using the proverb "a son and a daughter are like the two wheels of a chariot" would help persuade couples that it is not necessary to have a son to have a satisfactory family. On closer examination, it was found that the proverb only reinforced the belief that it *is* important to have a son, because the proverb suggested the necessity of having both a daughter and a son.

Possibly the three most useful checking questions to ask about any aspect of the project design are:

> *What do we know as **fact** about this aspect of the message or the project, and by what **evidence** do we know it is fact?*
>
> *What do we **not know** that we should know?*
>
> *Where, or how, or from whom can we find out what we do not know?*

The over-arching question with which to assess everything that the team decides is:

> *What could be **misunderstood** by our chosen audience, or what could possibly go wrong for them, if we present this information in this manner?*

These questions should be kept in mind at all times during the workshop, even while numerous other questions are being explored for each part of the design document. It is the workshop leader's task to keep probing until all doubts are removed and the design team reaches full agreement on every aspect of the project.

Guiding Workshop Discussion

Questions stimulate discussion and a few simple techniques can help keep the discussion on target and make it more productive:

1. **Establish at the outset the purpose of the workshop.** The purpose to the workshop is to reach agreement on all aspects of the serial drama design and to complete a

Key Questions in the Design Workshop

What do we know as **fact** about this aspect of the message or the project?

By what **evidence** do we know it is fact?

What do we **not know** that we should know?

Where, or how, or from whom can we find out what we do not know?

What could be **misunderstood** by our chosen audience, or what could **possibly go wrong** for them, if we present this information in this manner?

working draft of the design document. Participants can be reminded that it is not as important for them to champion their own causes as it is for them to contribute their expertise to establish a solid foundation for the serial drama creation.

2. Set a time limit for discussion of each point. When the time limit is up, one member of the group should be invited to outline briefly the position as it now appears. If there are still confusions, the workshop leader should frame some specific questions to redirect the team to more precise questions and to finalize discussion of the point. (See Design Workshop Question Guide, page 115.)

3. Set limits on problem re-hashing. Remind participants that the point of the workshop is to find **answers**, not to expound on problems that are already well known to all participants.

4. Invite one team member to record on the flip chart the decisions being reached by the participants. It is easier for participants to understand what decisions have already been made or where the discussion has gone off track if there is a written record in front of them at all times.

(Suggested questions for initiating discussion for each section of the design document can be found in Appendix A, page 115: Design Workshop Question Guide, together with guidelines on what information the audience will require in order to initiate discussion.)

The Design Workshop Time Line

While each design workshop is different, it has been found that the following time line is usually effective for preparing a 26 to 52 episode serial.

Days 1 and 2: Should include sections 1–10 of the design document, in plenary session, with part of Day 2 being given over to a meeting with decision makers. The early sections of the document that always generate the most discussion are:

- the selection of the specific audience(s), and the causes of their current attitude with regard to the desired behavior change,

- the measurable objectives and purposes, and

- the overall message and message focus.

Sufficient time must be allowed for thorough discussion of these areas. With serial dramas on sensitive topics such as reproductive health and family planning, the process of determining what can and cannot be said on the air, and of finding acceptable ways to present certain topics can be time consuming. It is better and more economical to spend all necessary time at this stage than to have to make adjustments to scripts, or even to recorded programs at a later date.

Day 2: Should be dedicated to a public relations presentation. Heads of appropriate ministries, organizations, aid

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Design Workshop Time Line

Days 1 and 2:
Sections 1–10

Day 2:
Public Relations Presentation

Days 3 and 4:
Sections 11–14

Day 5:
Sections 15–19

Ongoing:
Section 20

agencies, etc., can be invited to attend a short public relations session at the end of the second day. During this session, selected design team members explain what has been accomplished so far, and ask for comments and suggestions from invited guests. Not only is this a successful and popular public relations move, it often results in some valuable suggestions that can be incorporated into the work of the team. The most important result of this invitational meeting is a heightened sense of awareness and involvement on the part of decision makers, and a commitment—spoken or written—to support the project as fully as possible.

Days 3 and 4: Should include sections 11–14 of the design document, usually undertaken by small groups. These sections deal with the objectives, purposes, content and glossary entries of each of the individual episodes or groups of episodes for serials that will contain 26–52 episodes. (Initial planning for serials that are planned to go beyond 52 episodes can be restricted to the first year's episodes. A follow up meeting to plan future episodes can be held nine months into the first year of broadcasting.)

For certain projects, especially those using technical knowledge programs, it is not always possible to complete the work of these sections in two days. Some members may have to be called together for a few extra days to finalize their work after the design workshop. Where a six-day work week is available, the team can devote three days to sections 10–14, and contributions and adjustments to the glossary can be made as the document draft is being reviewed.

Day 5: Should include sections 15–19 of the design document, which are discussed in plenary session. Initial work on these sections can be handled on the last day of the workshop. Finalization of each of these sections usually requires additional detailed input from one or two authorized people in the week or two following the design workshop. The time line, *for example*, cannot be completed until the writers have been appointed and their writing time requirements are known. Similarly, the media director can make final contributions to the time line only when the format of the episodes and the acting requirements are fully understood.

Ongoing: Segment 20—the story treatment and sample episode may be undertaken by the writer(s) during the workshop, but more often they are completed after the design workshop, when the writers have the opportunity to review the completed design document draft and story treatment suggestions.

Small-Group Working Guidelines

The following guidelines can assist in making small-group work as productive as possible:

1. **Keep groups to no more than three or four people.** Wherever possible, these groups should comprise a mix of professional expertise (content specialist, audience representative, media representative, etc.).

2. **Specify exactly what each small group will do.** Each group will work on the statement of the objectives, purpose, and content of episodes related to one of the sub-topics of the overall message. One group, *for example,*

might work on all programs relating to contraceptive methods, a second group might work on counseling methods, a third on safe motherhood guidelines, etc.

3. **Explain the need for precise message content definition.** Many people find it difficult to understand just how specifically the message content must be spelled out in the design document. *For example*, it is not sufficient for the content to state "this episode will give an explanation of nutrition and the importance of a balanced diet." The content must state exactly how the writer should explain "nutrition" in the script and exactly how "the importance of a balanced diet" should be explained. *For example:* The writer might be instructed to describe "nutrition" as being "the right amount and types of food to keep a healthy body and a healthy mind." Similarly, if one episode is to include information about possible side effects of a certain contraceptive method, then these side effects must be listed accurately in the design document content, and in the language that the writer should use for the chosen audience. It cannot be over-emphasized that it is not the writer's job to determine the message or to select the words in which precise message content must be given. It is the writer's job to create an exciting and attention-getting story, and then to weave into that story the exact message content that has been delineated by the design team.

4. **Have content specialists available.** During small-group work it is essential to have content specialists (those who are knowledgeable and up-to-date with local information relevant to the topic) available. If it is not possible to have one with each group, then those who are available should move from group to group to assist all groups with content accuracy.

5. **Make vital information available to all.** At the commencement of group work, make sure that each group has access to all research and reference materials that they will need to help them make determinations in their given topic. Group participants should be reminded frequently of such matters as the agreed-upon overall message and focus as they prepare the objectives, purpose, and content for individual episodes or episode groups.

6. **Remind groups of the elements of a well-constructed message.** Groups should be reminded to check that every message they prepare is:
   - Correct
   - Complete
   - Clear
   - Concise
   - Consistent
   - Culturally appropriate

7. **Remind groups to use the glossary and acronym display board.** As members of a group locate a word or term that they believe should be included in the glossary or the acronym list, they should write it on a centrally displayed bulletin board or flip chart sheet together with what they consider to be the appropriate translation or definition. A certain

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part of each day can be set aside for a discussion of these definitions, so that a consensus can be reached on glossary entries. In the episode content they prepare, groups should mark with an asterisk (*) all words or phrases that will be defined or translated in the glossary and all acronyms that are spelled out in the acronym list. This ensures that the writer(s) will know which words and terms require exact definition.

After the Design Workshop—Completing the Design Document

At the end of the design workshop, the design document will be in first draft form. There still will be considerable work to be done on it. As quickly as possible after the workshop, the document must be completed and approved by all those in the appointed review panel (See page 29, section 15 of the design document) and translated, if necessary, so that it can be used as the basis for all ongoing tasks. The program manager must ensure that these tasks are completed promptly.

Following are guidelines for completing the design document:

- Arrange two or three meetings of a small design team task force to finish any sections of the document that were left incomplete. (Team members can be asked to volunteer for the smaller task force or they can be invited by the program manager.) Parts of the document that are likely to require completion or that have not had sufficient time spent on them during the design workshop include:
    - job descriptions or task delineation for each team member
    - glossary
    - table of contents
    - signatory page (See sample on page 51.)
- Have completed document entered accurately into the computer.
- Have document translated (where necessary).
- Have document reviewed by the script review panel within a set time period.
- Determine (alone or with another designated team member) which recommended changes from the review panel will be incorporated in the finished document.
- Have changes translated.
- Have changes entered into computer.
- Provide copies of the signed, approved document to all those who will need them, especially the writer(s), script review panel, funding agency home office, appropriate Ministry heads, IEC project director, design team members, media director, evaluator or evaluation team, and support and promotional material writers.
- Arrange for an official document signing date—at a special ceremony if

desired. It is often found useful to arrange a special ceremony at which ministerial representatives and other important authority figures meet to sign the completed document together. This event can be the occasion for press coverage and perhaps some oral statements of commitment to the project from those whose input and influence can be beneficial in ensuring project continuation and success.

The completed design document should be something of which all design team members are proud. It is the published and archival record of their knowledge and intentions. Frequently, program managers about to start up a new project request copies of previous design documents that they can use as templates or guidelines. All members of the design team should feel confident that their document presents a secure and safe foundation on

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SAMPLE SIGNATORY PAGE

RADIO COMMUNICATION PROJECT
RADIO DISTANCE EDUCATION SERIES

Signatories

The signatures below indicate that this design document in this, the final version, has been content-endorsed by the following organizations through their nominated representatives:

Dr. Kalyan Raj Pandrey
Director General
Ministry of Health His Majesty's Government

Dr. Shyam P. Bhattarai
Director
National Health, Education Information & Communication Center Ministry of Health His Majesty's Government

Mrs. Vijaya K.C.
Director
National Training Center Ministry of Health His Majesty's Government

Mr. Sailendra Raj Sharma
Director General
Radio Nepal

Pamela J. Allen, Ph.D
Country Representative
The Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services Nepal

Mr. S. K. Alok
Country Director
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Nepal

Phyllis Tilson Piotrow, Ph.D.
Professor and Director
Johns Hopkins University, Center for Communication Programs Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Ms. Molly Gingrich
Chief
Office of Family Health and Family Planning, United States Agency For International Development (USAID), Nepal

Dr. Hira Shrestha
Acting Director
Family Health Division Ministry of Health His Majesty's Government

Chapter Five

The Writing Process

Good writing is essential to a successful serial drama.

Topics in This Chapter

- ❖ **Writing tasks for a serial drama project**
- ❖ **The pilot episodes**
- ❖ **Steps in the script writing process**
- ❖ **Page layout**
- ❖ **Script review**
- ❖ **Writing support materials**
- ❖ **Guidelines for preparing support materials**
- ❖ **Promotional materials**
- ❖ **Guidelines for preparing promotional materials**
- ❖ **Guidelines for team writing**

Writing Tasks for a Serial Drama Project

The major writing work of a radio serial drama involves the dramatic scripts, but the overall writing tasks for the project also include treatment development, character profile creation, pilot-test scripts, support and promotional materials. The story treatment, character profiles, pilot scripts, and ongoing script writing will be the task of the script writer. *The task of preparing support materials should be assigned to a separate writer. Promotional materials are best prepared by someone experienced in promotional and advertising writing.* All those involved in any aspect of writing for the serial drama project should be familiar with and make constant reference to the design document.

The full treatment of the serial and detailed profiles of the main characters should be completed and approved by the review panel before ongoing script writing begins. The **treatment** or **synopsis** is the narrative outline of the entire story to be covered in the serial drama, including the main plot, sub-plots, characters, and outlines of how the message will be included in each plot. **Character profiles** are detailed descriptions of the main characters in each plot. The creation of profiles ensures that characters will be believable, interesting, individual, and suited to the chosen audience. (Information for script writers on how to prepare the treatment and the character profiles is provided in the companion book, *How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Guide.*)

The finished treatment and character profiles are reviewed by the program manager and the review panel, and suggested changes are discussed in detail with the writer. Later adjustments to the treatment may have to be made to accommodate any changes in the finalized design document, but

considerable time is saved if the writer prepares a first draft treatment immediately after the design workshop concludes. (Guidelines for the review panel are included later in this chapter.)

The Pilot Episodes

Once the treatment is approved, special scripts can be prepared for pre-testing or pilot testing. (The term pilot testing is usually used at this stage so as not to confuse the testing of trial scripts with the audience pre-testing that is done in the initial analysis phase and from which base-line surveys are compiled.) Pilot episodes guide the creation of all other episodes of the serial drama. Pilot episodes are tested to ensure that the story and characters are attractive to the audience and that the message is understood but not didactic.

Usually three pilot episodes are scripted and played to sample audiences. These episodes are specifically written to represent different parts of and differing characters in the story. Each pilot episode contains some aspect of the message which is blended into the story in the typical Enter-Educate manner. The information gained from testing the pilot episodes with a sample of the chosen audience is used to strengthen the story line, the character presentation and the message blend before ongoing script writing begins. (Further information on pilot testing is given in Chapter 6.)

If the project is using support materials that have been written previously, such as a text book or manual, it is necessary to ensure that the content and glossary entries in the design document match those in the existing support materials. Existing support materials should be tested along with the pilot episodes to ensure that listeners know how to use support materials during or after the broadcasts. If new support materials are to be prepared, this task should be commenced at the same time as pilot episode writing, so that episodes and support materials can be pilot tested at the same time. Promotional materials are created later so that, if desired, they can refer to characters and events from the serial.

Steps in the Script Writing Process

Developing scripts for a serial drama involves many steps for which the program manager is responsible:

1. **Selecting the Writer(s).**
   Selecting a writer for an Enter-Educate serial drama is often a challenge. The temptation is to look for a well-known playwright or novelist, but this can be a mistake. Creative writers often find adjusting to the discipline of writing an Enter-Educate serial drama extremely difficult and at times impossible. The suggestion that a famous writer will attract a large audience has a certain validity, but it may be better to turn a new writer into a celebrity through a successful Enter-Educate drama than to have a famous writer fail to incorporate the messages appropriately.

   It can be equally fruitless to ask experts in the content area, such as health workers or doctors, to write drama scripts. While they may have expertise in the message area, they usually lack the necessary creative skills

Steps in the Script Writing Process

1. Selecting the writer(s)

2. Determining the number of writers to use

3. Contracting with the writer(s)

4. Arranging training as needed

5. Arranging for the writer(s) to visit with members of a representative audience to become familiar with their lifestyles

6. Holding regular script meetings with the writer(s) and director

7. Devising and overseeing a script-tracking system to ensure that all scripts are written, reviewed, revised, and recorded on time

to write good drama. Success most often lies in finding a competent writer who is willing to learn the new skill of Enter-Educate writing. The selected writer(s) must attend the design workshop. Frequently, it is advisable to invite two or more writers to attend and ask each to submit an audition script at the end of the workshop. The audition script, based on what the writers learned the workshop, will give a clear indication of their ability to adapt to the Enter-Educate writing process. The selection of the writer is based on the quality of the audition script and should be made as soon as possible after the workshop.

2. **Determining the Number of Writers**
    For a serial that is to be broadcast once a week for six to twelve months, it is generally sufficient to have only one writer. If the serial is to be broadcast five or more days per week over an extended period of time, it might be necessary to use more than one writer—especially if their writing is a part-time occupation. (Guidelines on team writing can be found at the end of this chapter.)

3. **Contracting with Writers**
    Writers for Enter-Educate serials should be given written contracts spelling out exactly what their duties are with regard to:
    *   the number and length of episodes to be written
    *   the frequency with which episodes must be handed in to the program manager
    *   the quality of writing expected
    *   the limit on the number of characters permitted in any one episode (this is sometimes made necessary by budgetary limitations or a shortage of actors)
    *   the need to revise scripts in accordance with comments from the review panel and in accordance with a designated time line
    *   the need to adhere to both the time line and to the design document
    *   *the program manager's position as final authority on all script decisions.*
    Some program managers also like to include incentives and penalties in the writer's contract: a financial penalty for every script that comes in late (barring unavoidable circumstances), and a financial bonus every time ten scripts have come in on time. If such a clause is included in the contract it is wise to include a rider about "unavoidable circumstances" causing lateness of scripts. The unavoidable circumstances should be spelled out as accurately as possible. *For example:* Documented illness of or accident involving the writer, accidents of nature (weather-related), etc. A similar penalty and incentive system can be offered to other essential personnel, such as the director and the actors.

The contract can be made directly with the appointed writer or writers, or it can be part of an overall contract made with the production house. A writer's contract that is part of the production house contract should include a clause stating that the program manager has the right to see and approve samples of the writers' work before the final contract is signed.

It is advisable to give contracted writers some written guidelines to ensure a clear understanding of the writing obligations. The guidelines are given in the shaded area on the right side of this page.

4. **Writing Training**
Few writers have had previous experience at the Enter-Educate format, which blends a message with a story, and they will require some training in this method. Training should be given by a recognized consultant (local or international). The training is usually either a one week concentrated workshop or a series of one-on-one sessions over a period of one or two weeks as the writers prepare scripts for the serial drama.

(A printed course in writing Enter-Educate serial drama can be found in the companion volume to this book, *How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Guide.*)

5. **Visiting the Audience**
Unless writers have spent a good deal of their lives living among the audience for whom the serial is designed, it is essential that they visit a representative group. A week-long visit is beneficial if writers spend the time wisely: listening, observing, and making notes. They are likely to obtain a more realistic understanding of the audience if they are in the community purely as visitors and do not share the real purpose of their visit with the people. The firsthand knowledge gained from this time in the community will contribute significantly to the quality and relevance of the scripts. The program manager should plan with the writer(s) in what location and when this visit will take place and make the necessary arrangements for transport, accommodation, and per diem.

6. **Holding Regular Script Meetings**
Even where the serial is being created by one writer alone, regular script meetings should be held with the writer, program manager, content specialist, and perhaps an audience representative. At these meetings, the writer can discuss any difficulties, and ask for help or suggestions as needed. These meetings should be seen not as opportunities for criticism, so much as occasions for sharing, reviewing, and strengthening. Writers

Writing Guidelines

Writers for Enter-Educate serial drama are expected to be willing and able to:

- work with the design team during the design workshop

- consider the ideas and suggestions of other team members regarding ways to combine the message and the story

- spend time getting to know and understand the chosen audience

- study and employ the principles of Enter-Educate writing

- abide by the design document instructions with regard to message content for all episodes

- use glossary terms and definitions correctly and consistently

- submit scripts in a timely manner for review and accept the decisions of the program manager with regard to script changes

- abide by the script writing time line

- accept the program manager as the final authority with regard to script changes.

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often find it helpful to have input from others when their own ideas are flagging, and it is always encouraging to know there are people who are sincerely interested in how the story is developing.

7. **Script-tracking System**

Scripts change hands many times during development: from writer to program manager to review team, back to the program manager, to typists and translators, and then to the director, technicians, and actors. The program manager needs to have a recording or tracking system that allows anyone involved in the project to know where a particular script is easily and quickly at any given time. The recording system can be as simple as an exercise book where the location and progress of the script is recorded. A better approach, however, is the use of a "big board" set up on the wall in the project office. (See sample on next page). The board lists each episode by number and shows the date by which each script should arrive at each step in the scripting and production process. Each step is checked off and dated as it is completed. This allows for a quick and easy check on script progress and also allows the program manager to see where delays are occurring.

The program manager may want to enter the tracking information personally in order to stay acquainted with the status of each script. Alternatively, individuals—such as writer, reviewer, director—can be responsible for filling in the big board as each task is completed and the script is passed to the next person.

The script-tracking system sample on the next page is based on a continuous system with scripts being written, reviewed, rewritten, and recorded on an ongoing basis. Episodes are recorded three at a time once a month. This system shows that for a first broadcast date of May 5, it is necessary to complete scripting on January 1— a four month lead time.

Sample Script Tracking System

Program #1	Program #2	Program #3	Program #4	Program #5	Program #6
Script to P.M. Due: **Jan 1 (Fri)** Rec'd:	Script to P.M. Due: **Jan 8** Rec'd:	Script to P.M. Due: **Jan 15** Rec'd:	Script to P.M. Due: **Jan 22** Rec'd:	Script to P.M. Due: **Jan 29** Rec'd:	Script to P.M. Due: **Feb 5** Rec'd:
Translated. Due: **Jan 6 (Wed)** Rec'd:	Translated. Due: **Jan 13** Rec'd:	Translated. Due: **Jan 20** Rec'd:	Translated. Due: **Jan 27** Rec'd:	Translated. Due: **Feb 3** Rec'd:	Translated. Due: **Feb 10** Rec'd:
In computer. Date: **Jan 7 (Thu)**	In computer. Date: **Jan 14**	In computer. Date: **Jan 21**	In computer. Date: **Jan 28**	In computer. Date: **Feb 4**	In computer. Date: **Feb 11**
To reviewers. Due: **Jan 8 (Fri)** Sent: From reviewers. Due: **Jan 14 (Thu)** Rec'd: 1: 2: 3: 4:	To reviewers. Due: **Jan 15** Sent: From reviewers. Due: **Jan 21** Rec'd: 1: 2: 3: 4:	To reviewers. Due: **Jan 22** Sent: From reviewers. Due: **Jan 28** Rec'd: 1: 2: 3: 4:	To reviewers. Due: **Jan 29** Sent: From reviewers. Due: **Feb 4** Rec'd: 1: 2: 3: 4:	To reviewers. Due: **Feb 5** Sent: From reviewers. Due: **Feb 11** Rec'd: 1: 2: 3: 4:	To reviewers. Due: **Feb 12** Sent: From reviewers. Due: **Feb 18** Rec'd: 1: 2: 3: 4:
To writer (Rewrite) Due: **Jan 15 (Fri)** Rec'd:	To writer (Rewrite) Due: **Jan 22** Rec'd:	To writer (Rewrite) Due: **Jan 29** Rec'd:	To writer (Rewrite) Due: **Feb 5** Rec'd:	To writer (Rewrite) Due: **Feb 12** Rec'd:	To writer (Rewrite) Due: **Feb 19** Rec'd:
To P.M. Due: **Jan 20 (Wed)** Rec'd:	To P.M. Due: **Jan 27** Rec'd:	To P.M. Due: **Feb 3** Rec'd:	To P.M. Due: **Feb 10** Rec'd:	To P.M. Due: **Feb 17** Rec'd:	To P.M. Due: **Feb 24** Rec'd:
To Translator: Date: **Jan 21 (Thu)**	To Translator: Date: **Jan 28**	To Translator: Date: **Feb 4**	To Translator: Date: **Feb 11**	To Translator: Date: **Feb 18**	To Translator: Date: **Feb 25**
From translator. Due: **Jan 22 (Fri)** Rec'd:	From translator. Due: **Jan 29** Rec'd:	From translator. Due: **Feb 5** Rec'd:	From translator. Due: **Feb 12** Rec'd:	From translator. Due: **Feb 19** Rec'd:	From translator. Due: **Feb 26** Rec'd:
In computer. Date: **Jan 25 (Mon)**	In computer. Date: **Feb 1**	In computer. Date: **Feb 8**	In computer. Date: **Feb 15**	In computer. Date: **Feb 22**	In computer. Date: **Mar 1**
To Media Director. Due: **Jan 26 (Tue)** Rec'd:	To Media Director. Due: **Feb 1** Rec'd:	To Media Director. Due: **Feb 9** Rec'd:	To Media Director. Due: **Feb 16** Rec'd:	To Media Director. Due: **Feb 23** Rec'd:	To Media Director. Due: **Mar 2** Rec'd:
Recorded, edited, copied. Due: **Feb 19 (Fri)** Complete:	Recorded, edited, copied. Due: **Feb 19** Complete:	Recorded, edited, copied. Due: **Feb 19** Complete:	Recorded, edited, copied. Due: **Mar 12** Complete:	Recorded, edited, copied. Due: **Mar 12** Complete:	Recorded, edited, copied. Due: **Mar 12** Complete:
Archive script filed: Date: **Feb 22 (Mon)** Master tape filed: **Feb 22**	Archive script filed: Date: **Feb 22** Master tape filed: **Feb 22**	Archive script filed: Date: **Feb 22** Master tape filed: **Feb 22**	Archive script filed: Date: **Mar 15** Master tape filed: **Mar 15**	Archive script filed: Date: **Mar 15** Master tape filed: **Mar 15**	Archive script filed: Date: **Mar 15** Master tape filed: **Mar 15**
Broadcast. Planned date: **May 5** Actual date:	Broadcast. Planned date: **May 12** Actual date:	Broadcast. Planned date: **May 19** Actual date:	Broadcast. Planned date: **May 26** Actual date:	Broadcast. Planned date: **June 2** Actual date:	Broadcast. Planned date: **June 9** Actual date:

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Page Layout

Script cover sheets, script headers, and script review sheets can be prepared in advance of need and given to the writer to use in script preparation.

The script cover sheet (see example on page 61) shows:

- the serial title and the episode number
- the date of writing (or date of broadcast)
- the writer's name
- the page number in the design document where the episode content is listed (so that reviewers can check content details if necessary)
- the purpose and measurable objectives of the episode
- the list of characters in the script
- a place where the writer (after completing the episode) can list the music and sound effects needed for the episode.

Listing the measurable objectives and purpose of the episode on the front cover sheet of the script ensures quick and accurate reviewing, and assists the director and the actors to understand the educational intent of the episode. The writer's listing of characters, sound effects, and music assists in the quick and accurate production of the episode. (More details on production needs are given in Chapter 8 on *Edit-Free Production.*)

SAMPLE SCRIPT COVER SHEET

CUT YOUR COAT ACCORDING TO YOUR CLOTH

Episode #6 — May 29
Writer: K. Gartaula — Program Duration: 20 minutes

DESIGN DOCUMENT Page 20

PURPOSE:	The purpose of this program is to encourage the audience to understand that the NEW focus for families is on the "WELL-PLANNED" family, rather than on "family planning."
OBJECTIVES:	At the end of this program, audience members will
KNOW:	What is meant by the "well-planned family"
	What the components of the "well-planned family" are
	What is meant by "quality of life" and how having a "well-planned family" can contribute to a better quality of life for all family members.
DO:	Begin to adopt and use the phrase the "well-planned family" in place of "family planning."
ATTITUDE:	They will have a positive interest in the "well-planned family" concept.
	They will feel happy and confident about being among those who understand and use the new terminology.

(To be filled in by the writer on completion of the script)

<u>CAST OF CHARACTERS</u>
Doctor X
Midwife
    etc.

<u>MUSIC & FX</u> (in order in which they appear in the program)
Pg. 1. L. 1 MUSIC: Theme Music
Pg. 2. L. 6 FX: Dogs barking
Pg. 2. L. 9 FX: Dogs fighting

Script Pages

Each page in the script should be set out as demonstrated on the sample script pages following. In some projects, scripts will be written in one language and then translated to another (English for example) so that they can be reviewed at the home office of the funding agency. Where translation is necessary, it is important that all page and line numbers are the same in both languages so that comments in one language version will apply accurately in the other language.

1. **Page header.** Each page of the script will have a header that indicates: series title; program number; writer's name; writing date; and page number. Notice* that the page number is given as 1 of 10. Giving the number of the last script page as well as of the current page allows those using the script (actors, reviewers, director) to be sure they have all the pages of the script. If a computer is used for script writing, this header can be entered for regular use. Where a computer is not available, it is helpful to copy a quantity of script paper for the writer with the heading blocks already in place.

2. **Speech numbering.** Every new direction or speech on the page is numbered. This allows the director to cue an actor or technician quickly to a particular line in the script. Perhaps the director wants to stop the tape, rewind, and then rerecord from a particular spot. He can easily and quickly give the direction to the technician, "Rewind to the end of line 5." He can just as quickly advise the actor, "Pick up from the beginning of line 6."

   Where an actor has a long speech, each new paragraph of the speech is given a new number, so that it can be identified and referred to easily.

   Most writers recommence numbering on each page with the number 1. Some writers prefer to continue the numbers sequentially throughout the entire script. The disadvantage of this second method is that if—during editing or rewriting—a line is added or omitted early in the script, it mandates the renumbering of every line from there to the end of the script.

   Writers using computers might find it easier to use the automatic line numbering command, in which case every line of every page will be numbered.

3. **Character names.** The name of the character who is speaking is given in UPPER CASE letters. The name is followed by a colon (:) and a reasonable space is left on the same line before the speech begins. A double space is left between the end of one speech and the beginning of the next so that it is perfectly clear where one actor's lines end, and those of the next begin.

4. **Actor instructions.** Instructions to the actor about how to deliver the line, or about directions to move toward or away from the microphone are given in upper case letters in parentheses at the beginning of the actor's line.

   For example:

   DOCTOR: (COMING INTO THE ROOM) Now, Mrs. Garda, let's see what we can do to
                       help you today.

   In cases where the actor must change tone or make a move **in the middle** of a speech, the instructions are included at the appropriate place.

   For example:

   MOTHER: I just don't know what to do with these children.... (CALLING OFF)...Come here at once all
                       of you. (INTO MICROPHONE, SADLY) I suppose I'm just not a good mother.

5. **Speech pause or break.** An ellipsis (a series of full stops) is used to indicate a pause or a natural break in a character's speech.

   For example:

   NARRATOR: And once again it is time for us to hear the beautiful music of Harold's drum...I'm sure
                       you remember Harold...Well, it is time for us to hear him once more.

6. **Technician's directions.** All directions that are for the technician—MUSIC and FX directions—are given in upper case print and underlined, so that the technician can identify quickly those areas of the script which are his responsibility. The first word in a musical direction is "MUSIC." The first word in a sound effect direction is "FX." This helps the technician quickly identify whether to ready the music

tape or the sound effects tape.

For example:

MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP :05. CROSS FADE TO

JOSEPH: Oh well, back to work. Every day it's the same old thing....chop
     the wood; milk the cows.

FX: SOUND OF WOOD BEING CHOPPED. MIXED WITH

FX. CATTLE MOOING IN DISTANCE

7. **End of page.** A speech is never broken at the end of the page. If the whole speech will not fit at the
end of the page, then the whole speech should be transferred to the top of the next page. This is for
the actors' sake: actors must turn their heads briefly away from the microphone to move from one page
to the next; it is difficult to read lines while doing this. In the sample script (this page), line 14, which
is an incomplete speech, should have been moved to the next page.

(Note: in this script, the name BIR BAHADUR has been abbreviated to BIR BA from line 3 on.)

 * Page numbers should be given always as (*for example*) Page 1 of 10, 2 of 10, etc. Stating the last
number of the script on every page assures users that they have the entire script.

SAMPLE SCRIPT PAGE

1 Series Title: "Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth"   * Page 1 of 10

Program # 21
Writer: Kuber Gartaula   Date: October 31

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1. BIR BAHADUR: (SLIGHTLY NERVOUS) What happened, did you not ask the health worker?

2. BELI: I should not ask the health worker such things...rather I should do what the younger
father-in-law told us to do. Do you know why your older sister-in-law had miscarriages?

3. BIR BA: Why?

4. BELI: He said that after conception Laxmi did not take enough nutritious food and enough rest.

5. BIR BA: Forget the past. Since you are at home, why don't you take care of her?

6. BELI: No, no, something has happened to me like what has happened to older sister-in-law.
(VERY SHY) It is two months.....

7. BIR BA: (VERY HAPPY) Is it so? It is two months already. Have you told anybody else?

8. BELI: Yes, other women know women's business...only you...

9. BIR BA: And now I know too.... I am very happy.

10. MUSIC. SCENE CHANGE MUSIC. BRIEF :05

11. FX: NOISE OF FRYING AND STIRRING VEGETABLE CURRY

12. BELI: Why are you in the kitchen so early, older sister-in-law?

13. LAXMI: Today I am preparing food early for the father-in-law only.

14. MAYADEVI: Your father-in-law has to go to the fields early, but he said he would be

8. **Remarks column.** The remarks column is optional and is essential only in scripts where the writer needs to include comments or suggestions for the support materials writer or for monitors or evaluators.

For example:

The writer might include in the script a list of special conditions that a health worker should check for before advising a client to use a specific contraceptive. The writer wants to be sure that this list is included in the *Health Worker's Handbook*, which is the support material being prepared for this particular series of programs. The writer, therefore, makes a comment to this effect in the appropriate place in the remarks column. Similarly, the writer might be introducing a new activity or a new way of explaining a concept, and might want the monitors to observe whether it works well with the audience.

SAMPLE SCRIPT PAGE WITH REMARKS COLUMN

5. H.W:	I am glad you have come to ask my advice about the contraceptive pill. It may very well be an appropriate choice for you. First, however, we must be sure that you do not have any of the conditions that make it unwise for a woman to use the pill. May I ask you some questions?	**8** Support Writer: *Be sure to put the list of conditions in the Health Worker's Hand Book.*
6. SHANA:	Yes, of course.	
7. H.W:	Are you taking any medication for TB or for epilepsy?	
8. SHANA:	Goodness, no. I am perfectly healthy.	
9. H.W.:	Good. Then tell me, have you ever had any blood clots in your legs, your eyes, or your lungs?	
10. SHANA:	No.	
11. H.W:	What about bleeding? Have you had any vaginal bleeding lately?	
12. SHANA:	No, again.	
13. H.W:	I have already checked your blood pressure, so I know you are not in the danger zone which is anything higher than 140 over 90. So far things are looking good. And I have also checked your breasts and found nothing to suggest you might have breast cancer.	
14. SHANA:	Does that mean then that I can take the pill?	
15. H.W:	I think so. There is one more category of women who shouldn't take the pill, but you don't fit it.	
16. SHANA:	What is it?	
17. H.W:	Women who are over 40 years of age and smoke more than 15 cigarettes a day.	

Script Review

To save time, each reviewer can be asked to restrict evaluation comments to his or her special area:

- **The director** checks the suitability of the script to the chosen medium.
- **The drama evaluator** checks the dramatic structure of the plot, the portrayal of characters, naturalness of dialogue, and integrity of plot and character development from episode to episode.
- **The content specialists** review, against the design document, the accuracy of the information, the suitability of the language, and the method of presentation to the chosen audience.
- **The ministry representative assures** that everything in the script is in line with ministry policy.
- **The funding agency representative** ensures that nothing in the script contravenes agency policy.
- **The program manager** reviews all comments and determines which will be included in the finished script and how they will be incorporated: Will the program manager put them in or must the script go back to the writer for rewriting? Every script given to reviewers should have the standard cover sheet and a review sheet for their use.

Briefing the Script Review Panel

The review panel was selected during the design workshop, but it will be necessary to determine a practical process that will allow for ongoing, accurate, and timely review of scripts. A briefing meeting should be held with reviewers to discuss such matters as:

- how often reviewers will be given scripts
- how many scripts they will be given at one time
- how much time they will be allowed to review each script
- how they should record their comments and suggestions
- how scripts will be delivered to and collected from them
- in what language each reviewer will need the script
- how much time the program manager will need to reconcile suggested changes
- how much time script writers will need to incorporate suggested changes into the scripts.

Reviewer Guidelines

In order to ensure useful and timely review of treatments and scripts, the program manager can follow these guidelines:

1. Provide each reviewer with a completed design document.

2. Explain the particular aspect of the scripts each reviewer should cover: content, audience acceptability, drama construction, media suitability.

3. Explain the importance of careful and timely review.

4. Give each reviewer a copy of the script time line, showing when scripts will go to reviewers and when they must be returned to the program manager. Ensure that all reviewers are in agreement with the time line.

5. Explain to reviewers how to use the review sheet on the front of each script, noting the page number and line number of those parts of the script on which they have comments.

6. Invite all reviewers to check with the program manager any time they have questions or uncertainties.

Box 7

To finalize the overall timeline, listed issues need to be addressed. It is helpful during this inaugural review panel meeting to explain the review process to panel members and show them how to fill out the comment sheet that will be attached to each script. Panel members also should be reminded of the necessity of returning their comment sheets promptly, so that the serial time line can be kept on track.

Script Review Cover Sheets

The script review process is quicker and more accurate with the use of script review sheets, such as that shown below. (A reviewer's hand written comments are seen on the sample page.)

SAMPLE REVIEW COVER SHEET

HAPPY FAMILIES
REVIEW PANEL COMMENT SHEET
JHU/ PCS Office
Telephone: 000 0000
Program Officer: (Name)

PROGRAM # _____   WRITER _____

Pg. 26.4 CHANGE TO... CHECK WITH THE HEALTH WORKER

Pg. 6.2.17. Omit REFERENCE TO LOCAL SHOPS AS outlet FOR NORPLANT PURCHASE. NORPLANT IS NOT AVAILABLE IN LOCAL SHOPS

DATE DELIVERED: _____ PLEASE RETURN BY: _____

Note: Please list comments **on this** page by page and line number. Use the other side of this page also, if necessary. Please comment **ONLY** on those parts of the script marked in red ink.

Reviewer's Name: _____   Title: _____

Date: _____   Tel.: _____

Overseeing script translation, copying, and distribution. The creative work of writing is only one part of script preparation for serial drama. Equally important and time-consuming activities are translation (where the script must be reviewed also in a language other than that in which it is written), typing, copying, and distribution to reviewers, director, actors, and others. Each of these tasks requires continual supervision from the program manager.

Ensuring maintenance of the time line. The program manager is responsible for ensuring that all those associated with the script writing process hold as closely as possible to the time line. This begins with ensuring that writers have enough time to complete the script of each episode and revise previously written episodes at the same time. Script writers might easily and readily agree to a time line at the time of signing the contract, but the demanding task of writing and reviewing one or more scripts per week can become overwhelming as work progresses. Time must be allowed for the following steps:

- writing the first draft of the script,
- translating the first draft (where necessary),
- reviewing the first draft (review panel),
- determining which changes to include (program manager),
- incorporating changes to finalize script (writer or program manager),
- translating of final script (where necessary),
- entering final corrected script into computer (if writer does not work on a computer),
- reviewing final script for typing errors,
- copying final approved script for distribution,
- distribution of script copies to director, actors, technicians, etc.

Activities beyond this point are included in the time line for pre-production and production.

In determining the writing time line, it is necessary to consider the work habits of the writer(s). For a 52-episode serial, most writers are more comfortable writing consistently at the rate of two episodes a week for 26 weeks rather than writing 12 episodes at a time with two or three week breaks in between. Encouraging adherence to a consistent writing schedule helps assure the continuity of the story and the accuracy of the message.

Some program managers require that script writing be done in the project office. For many writers, simply having to sit down at a particular desk at the same time every day makes it easier to stay on track.

The importance of establishing and maintaining the time line cannot be over-stressed. Even a time line that appears to have comfortable latitude should be strictly maintained. Unforeseen events occur in every project, and minor mishaps can throw the project irretrievably off schedule. Permitting the time line to slip once is tacit permission for it to happen again. The very first time script writing falls behind deadline the program manager should discuss the problem with the writer and find a way of making up the deficit. It is in the matter of maintaining the time line that the use of penalty and incentive clauses in the contract can be useful.

Writing Support Materials

Although the script for the serial drama is the number one writing task, the preparation of support materials can be equally important. Frequently, the support materials for a media project are prepared by someone already employed by the project office. Sometimes, an outside writer is contracted to do the job. In either case, the support materials writer should be experienced in the preparation of educational materials and should be prepared to work closely with the design document and with the script writer. The support materials writer should be present during the design workshop and should prepare initial materials to be tested along with the pilot scripts.

Support materials for technical knowledge serials generally are more detailed than those for non-technical serials and the distribution of them also can be more complex. For non-technical outreach, it may be sufficient to promote the idea that additional information can be obtained from trained personnel at a local health post. Printed support materials generally are not used with a non-technical serial designed to motivate the general public. Such materials are expensive to produce and distribute and the major reason for using a medium like radio is to avoid the expense of print. Serials intended for distance education, however, require more specific materials. In some cases, these serials can make use of existing print materials such as text books used in classrooms for health worker training. When new print materials are to be especially designed to accompany the distance education serial, the program manager must investigate possible distribution channels and make sure that the materials are available for listeners before the serial goes on the air.

For distance education projects, where the aim is to educate the audience and enhance their skills, supplemental print materials can provide permanent reinforcement for what the electronic medium delivers in a one-time presentation. The support materials, however, should not attempt to duplicate the broadcast programs. They should provide a brief, but accurate, point-form summary of the message the drama serial demonstrates through the story.

Distance education courses should not be entirely dependent upon support materials. Sometimes these materials are difficult to deliver to students who live in remote areas and might not be received on time. Some students might not have the materials with them at the time of the broadcast; others might have limited literacy skills which will make the use of print materials difficult for them.

Guidelines for Preparing Support Materials

Support materials that are designed to accompany an Enter-Educate radio serial drama should follow these guidelines:

Use illustrations as much as possible. (Because radio is an aural medium, the print materials should be used to illustrate what cannot be shown on radio.)

Use simple language and simple sentence structure. Even where listeners are fully literate, it is helpful for supplementary materials to be easy and quick to read. Distance education learners do not want to spend considerable time reading what they have already heard in the radio lessons.

Use the same terminology and definitions as used in the broadcasts. (Consistency is of paramount importance when print materials are designed to supplement a broadcast lesson.)

Follow the same sequence as the broadcast materials. Lesson #1—or Part 1 or Chapter 1—in the print materials should contain information that corresponds exactly with the message content of Episode #1—or perhaps episodes #1, #2, #3—in the drama serial, etc.

Design them for easy carrying and storage. This is particularly important for materials that accompany a distance education course. Many distance education students do not have radios of their own. They must go to a central location—perhaps a health post—to listen to the radio lessons. It is important, therefore, to ensure that printed support materials are easy to carry if learners are expected to refer to the materials during or immediately after the broadcast.

Check them against every episode of the serial drama to ensure consistency. Generally, it is most efficient to have support material writing follow script writing, because usually it is simpler and quicker to adjust the support material than the script.

Sample support materials should be tested with the pilot scripts to ensure that listeners understand how to use them and to ensure that the serial episodes are enhanced by but not totally reliant upon them.

5

Promotional Materials

Promotional materials generally have two aims: to attract the audience to the broadcast programs, and to arouse in the audience an interest in the behavior change that the Enter-Educate serial drama is advocating. Promotional materials do not have to be prepared at the time that scripting begins, but they must be ready for use at least one month before the serial drama goes on the air.

It is best to use a professional advertising agency to create promotional materials*, but where this is beyond the financial means of the project, the following guidelines can be helpful:

Guidelines for Preparing Promotional Materials

Create a slogan. Express in a few words the main emotional focus of the serial drama. Sometimes, the slogan might be the title of the drama. *For example:* The distance education serial in Bangladesh had the title *Under the Green Umbrella* which also expressed the main emotional focus of the drama: that the protection provided by field workers was like an umbrella of safety over the lives of the community members.

Create a logo (or small picture) that can be quickly associated with the main objectives of the project. *For example:* The Bangladesh project used a *green umbrella* logo. The green umbrella was painted on the outside of all health posts and quickly became associated with the concept of *total health protection* which could be obtained from the health clinic.

Create a jingle. This is a very short song or musical rhyme (of 4-20 lines) that is catchy and easy to sing.

Work within the local culture. Be sure that both the logo and the slogan are understood and appreciated by the audience for whom the drama is created. Something that is exciting and meaningful in one culture might be totally inappropriate in another. *For example:* An anti-diarrheal project in a West African country used posters in which the sugar-salt solution was mixed in a brightly colored, highly decorative bowl. The same poster was quite inappropriate in some East African countries where such bowls are used only by the very rich.

Know the entertainment preferences of the audience. If the chosen audience for the serial drama likes humor, use humor in the promotional material; if music is their choice, use music.

Use drama characters in the promotional material. Highly successful promotional campaigns can be designed around one or two of the most interesting characters in the drama. Pilot testing will help determine which characters are likely to have the greatest appeal to the audience.

Test the promotional materials on a sample of the audience to ensure that they attract the right degree of attention and interest.

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* Detailed guidelines for choosing and working with an advertising agency can be found in the book, *How to Select and Work with an Advertising Agency,* published by JHU/CCP.

Guidelines for Team Writing

Using a team of two or more writers is sometimes necessary for serial drama writing, *for example*, when the serial is to be broadcast five or six days a week, or when writing must be done as a part-time extra job. Team writing of serial drama requires careful and consistent use of the following guidelines:

Appoint a script editor (this can be one of the writers) who will keep detailed records of all characters and plots, and how they change and develop as the story moves along. The script editor keeps the story time line on track and ensures that the characters adhere to their character profiles.

Hold regular script planning meetings, led by the script editor and attended by all writers. During these meetings the story line or action of every plot in the serial is detailed—episode by episode—using the design document as the guide to message content. For a team of three writers, therefore, it would be necessary to work out, using the design document, thirty or sixty script outlines in each meeting. Individual writers are then assigned a group of episodes to write—usually ten or twenty (two or four weeks-worth if the serial is being broadcast five days a week).

In Indonesia, where two writers worked together on the creation of the serial *Lilin Lilin Di Depan (The Guiding Light)*, they prepared a chart (see sample chart on page 73) which showed how each plot would progress over a given number of episodes, and which segments of the design document messages would be included in these episodes. Each writer could see clearly where the story had to move at any time.

This script planning ensures that each writer knows where the story will be at the commencement of his or her episode group, exactly what must occur in the assigned episodes, and exactly where the actions and characters will be at the end of the group.

During these meetings the script editor will bring the writers up-to-date with character developments that should be incorporated in future episodes.

The meetings must be held absolutely regularly, and each meeting must be held before writers have finished their current block of episodes so that there is no delay between the completion of writing for one block and the commencement of writing for the next. *For example:* If a team of two writers has a four-week block in which to write episodes 111-150 (at the rate of five episodes a week for each writer), then *the script meeting for episodes 140-150 should be held no later than the end of week three.*

Provide typed summaries of plot and character decisions to each writer the day after the script planning meeting, or prepare and distribute a story-message grid.(See sample chart on page 73)

Ensure that writers return scripts to story editor before they are sent to the review panel. This means building extra days into the time line to allow the script editor to check every episode for its adherence to the story line that was developed during the previous script planning meeting.

Strict adherence to these steps makes it possible for team writing to proceed smoothly.

Where drama episodes are used as one segment of a magazine program, it may be easier to divide the writing assignment between two writers. One writer scripts the drama, while the other prepares the non-drama segments, which may be such items as interviews and quizzes. Each writer must be clear about the duration of his or her segment and must know how many pages of script are needed to fill the time slot so that program length is kept consistent.

Story Message Grid

Broadcast Month	Message: Design Doc #	Character: Yusman	Character: Dewi	Character: Tari	Character: Siti	Character: Rizal	Character: Darmi	Character: B. Atmo
5. July:	111-114: IUD	Yus., in home village, 3 days.	Disappointed that Yus. has not proposed when he returned to village.	Encourages Dewi to be patient with Yus. Talks with client about IUD.	Criticizes Yus. to Mr. Arief.	Wife has taken out loan for phase 1 of business.	Accuses Dewi's parents of being too patient with Yus.	Gives Yus. a job that could change his fortune.
	115-120: Midwife role in postnatal care.			Presentation to young mothers and fathers about care in pregnancy.		Rizal gets permit to open a fish business and build pond.	Makes "magic" to try to help persuade Tari to leave.	Gives advice to Yus. on how to become successful in business.
	121-127: Injectable & other options.	Yus. returns to the city.	Dewi learns from Tari about various contraceptives.	Boyfriend Sukran comes to village; upsets Tari because he wants her to come to city.	Asks Arief to help her persuade Tari to go with Sukran.			
	128-131: Contraceptive options.	Yus. begins work with Mrs Atmo. Thinks this may be road to success.	Dewi assists Tari to explain contraceptive options to community members.	Tari works with clients individually, counseling on options. Suk. still being pushy.	Forced to admit Dewi is doing good job as aide to health worker.	Young men plot to ruin Rizal's fish pond.		
6. August: 132 - 150	132-136: General story development.	Yus. adventures in city, trying out business ventures.	Dewi receives letter from Yus. Pleased at his success and the letter.	Tari discusses with Arief and Siti whether or not to go with Sukran.		Rizal reports the destruction of his pond. All dreams seem over.		

5

Chapter Six

The Pre-Production Phase

Pilot testing is an essential part of pre-production.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The pre-production phase**

❖ **Contracts for actors**

❖ **Training for actors**

The Pre-Production Phase

Once writing is under way, the project enters the pre-production and pilot stage. The program manager is responsible for ensuring that everything will be ready for the on-air date. The following tasks are included in this stage of the project:

1. **Time line finalization.** When the writers have determined their rate of writing and script revision to the satisfaction of the program manager, it is possible to finalize the time line for all other aspects of the serial drama project. Dates must be established for the following:

   - writing, recording, and testing of pilot scripts and support materials
   - review of pilot test results and specification of changes to be incorporated into future scripts
   - rehearsing, recording, and post-editing of all episodes
   - creating promotional materials
   - initiation of promotional activities
   - field monitoring
   - final evaluation.

   When the time lines have been completed, they must be distributed promptly to all who will be needing them.

2. **Evaluation contract finalization.** Finalize the contract with the agencies that will carry out evaluation activities such as pilot testing, field monitoring, and final evaluation. Often an outside agency is used for these activities, rather than having them done by project staff. The agency must be given a copy of the design document and instructed to use it as the basis of all their evaluation tools.

3. **Recording, presentation, and testing of pilot episodes with the sample audience.** Pilot episodes are part of the pre-testing process. Once the pilot scripts have been reviewed and revised, they are recorded in a fully professional manner. The pilots are then played to small sample groups of the chosen audience(s) who are asked to answer questions about the episodes. These questions usually are presented and discussed in focus groups, but, where appropriate, audience members can be asked to write

their answers to the questions. (Questions that can be used to test pilot scripts are included in Appendix B, page 132 of this book.)

4. **Pilot test results compilation.** There must be as little delay as possible between the end of testing and the compilation of test results that can be shared with the program manager, the writers, and the content advisors. Decisions are reached, based on these test results, about changes that should be made in story or message presentation before ongoing writing commences. These decisions should not be left to the writer alone, but should be made by the program manager in conference with the writer and other design team members.

5. **Support materials testing.** Support materials should be tested at the same time as the pilot scripts, and the results should be made available immediately to the support materials writers so that necessary changes can be incorporated.

6. **Standard opening and closing announcement preparation.** Every radio serial drama for social development is funded, sponsored, or supported by some organization or ministry, and these supporters should be acknowledged at the commencement of each broadcast. It is easiest to make this acknowledgment with a standard opening announcement. See example below.

Pre-Production Tasks

1. Time line finalization

2. Evaluation contract finalization

3. Recording, presentation, and testing of pilot episodes with the sample audience

4. Pilot test result compilation and decisions made about changes to be included in ongoing episodes

5. Support materials pilot testing and inclusion of recommended changes

6. Standard opening and closing announcement preparation

7. Air time confirmation

8. Promotional materials development, and promotion times and frequency establishment

9. Essential supply checking and replenishing as necessary

10. Actor selection, contracting, and training

11. Production team training

12. Sound effects collection and collation

13. Music composition or selection

6

SAMPLE OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

1. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP: 05. FADE AND HOLD UNDER</u>

2. ANNOUNCER: Bangladesh Betar. It's time for *Under the Green Umbrella*, a program for Field Workers. We are inviting you to join us in our *Under the Green Umbrella* program, brought to you by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs. Now, let's go to the home of our dear field worker friend, Tara Begum.

3. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP: 05. CROSS TO SCENE 1 AND FADE OUT</u>

Similarly, each episode will end with a standard closing announcement that reminds listeners when they can hear the next episode and provides any other standard information they might need. *For example:*

SAMPLE CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENT

15. <u>MUSIC. CLOSING MUSIC BEGINS SOFTLY. HOLD UNDER</u>

16. ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to Blue Hills, brought to you by the Australian Broadcasting Commission in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture. We remind you that you can obtain a Fact Pack about the agricultural information contained in these programs, by writing to: Blue Hills, P.O. Box 97Q, Sydney, NSW 20667.

17. <u>MUSIC. CLOSING MUSIC UP TO END</u>

These standard announcements can be prepared by the program manager and submitted to the appropriate government ministry for approval well in advance of regular recording sessions. Once approved, the announcements can be recorded on a master tape and copied on to the beginning and end of each episode without having to be re-recorded each time.

7. **Air time confirmation.** It is always wise to confirm that air time has been reserved as requested for the broadcast of the serial drama. Broadcast stations, especially those that are government owned, are liable to change broadcast policies and times arbitrarily. It is wise, therefore, to reconfirm dates and times when production is about to get under way.

8. **Promotional materials** development can begin once the scripts and support materials have been approved following the pilot tests. The precise time table for promotional activity development, testing, and use should be established at this time, together with determinations on the frequency of promotional activities. At the same time, agreements should be finalized with all outlets that will carry the promotional materials, such as newspapers, magazines, billboards, and electronic media.

   The main aim of all promotional material of this type should be to remind listeners of the content and behavioral objectives of the programs as well as the title and broadcast times. These standard promotional approaches can be used in the following ways:
   - **radio spots**, used several times a day, two to three weeks prior to the commencement of broadcasting the serial, then once a day, and eventually once a week when the serial is on the air;
   - **television spots** can be useful also, even for attracting a radio audience, but they are useful only when the chosen audience has access to television;
   - **newspapers** can be used for paid advertising and for stories in the news and editorial columns;

- **posters** can be placed in health clinics, in general stores, and on the backs of buses, trucks, and other general transport.

    All promotional advertising material should mention clearly the days and times of the broadcasts. To make more personal impact on the audience, a range of other materials can be employed, such as pencils, T shirts, caps, scarves, or handkerchiefs, with the serial drama logo on them.

9. **Essential supply checking** must take place before program recording gets under way. There must be sufficient supplies of tape for master copies and duplicates, storage boxes, editing equipment, sound effects storage tape, etc. The materials needed for production will depend largely on the type of production being done (digital, reel-to-reel, post-editing, etc.), therefore the media director should check all requirements at this stage to ensure that there will be no delays once recording begins.

10. **Actor selection** should begin well ahead of recording dates to avoid the disappointment of preferred actors not being available. The director is responsible for selecting the actors, but the program manager should ask for an audition performance (live or recorded) with actors chosen for leading roles to ensure their suitability for their designated roles. Once the recording schedule has been finalized, actors can be given written invitations or perhaps contracts to perform in the serial drama.

11. **Production Team Training.** In many developing countries, recording studios and equipment are not as sophisticated as the equipment used in technologically advanced countries. This should not be seen as a disadvantage, especially when it comes to the production of radio serial drama. A system using minimal equipment can work well for serial drama production. This system can be called "edit-free" production because it virtually eliminates expensive and time-consuming post production editing. Based on equipment and personnel available, the program manager will have to decide whether the edit-free approach is appropriate, and whether the production team will need training or guidance in this methodology. The guidelines given in Chapter 8 of this book are usually sufficient to help a production team get started in the edit-free system. Technicians and directors new to this system will need to practice it several times (perhaps during pilot episode production) before going into full-scale production.

12. **Sound effects collection and collation.** Once the story treatment has been approved and even before all scripts are finalized, the writer will be able to determine the need for local sound effects. Some radio stations and production houses have a supply of commercially produced sound effect tapes, but frequently these are not appropriate to local needs. Most commercial tapes are produced in Europe and America and do not include exotic sounds such as temple bells, local birds, and unusual animals. Such sounds should be recorded in the field and logged ready for recording needs. This task should be organized and completed by the director before regular production commences.

13. **Music is composed or chosen.** Music should be a distinguishing feature of every serial drama. Well-chosen music will attract the attention of

listeners who will soon come to associate a particular melody with the serial drama. Existing tunes, especially traditional ones, are sometimes appropriate for the drama's theme music. In other instances, it might be more appropriate to have new music composed especially for the serial drama. Composition should be undertaken well in advance of recording time. If existing music is chosen, the program manager should ensure that the music is in the public domain (that it is not subject to royalty fees). Paying either royalty fees or a penalty for failing to obtain permission to use the music can add considerably to the budget. Copyright generally stays in force for a period of 50 years, so the use of modern music almost always requires copyright clearance or the payment of a fee. If there are any doubts about the rights to the music, one should contact the recording company that produced the recorded version of the music. Failure to obtain the permission and pay the necessary fee can result in a very heavy fine in most countries. Music, whether it is chosen or composed for the serial, can be advantageous in promotional events.

Contracts for Actors

In most developing countries it is unknown for actors to be asked to sign contracts. If professional standards are to be set and encouraged, however, the program manager should consider inviting them to accept a contract. In the contract, the actor should be asked to:

- agree that he or she understands the nature and subject matter of the serial and is comfortable taking part in a drama that uses personal and intimate language (this agreement is necessary for those dramas that deal with subjects like contraception, maternal health, and pregnancy);
- prepare their scripts in advance, by marking up their speeches and rehearsing lines aloud;
- use the words in the script without ad-libbing (this is important in Enter-Educate drama where even minimal impromptu changes in the script can distort the message);
- attend all rehearsals on time;
- attend all recording sessions on time;
- accept the director's word as final in cases where there is disagreement between the actor and the director;
- advise the director well in advance if there are any dates on which the actor cannot be available for a recording session.

Most actors, even if they have not had contracts previously, appreciate the professionalism inherent in a contract. The program manager should remember, however, that a contract is a two-way agreement, and that conduct on the project side must be equally professional.

Training for Actors

In some parts of the world, where radio is not widely used for drama presentations, there is a shortage of trained radio actors. Some directors like to think that they can use well-known stage or street theater actors in radio drama, but radio requires very different abilities and techniques than are needed for "live" theater. It is often necessary to provide some training for the actors who will take part in the drama serial. The training can take the form of a one-day workshop or can be spread over several shorter sessions. (Guidelines for the training of radio actors are included in Chapter 8 of this book.)

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Chapter Seven

The Production Phase
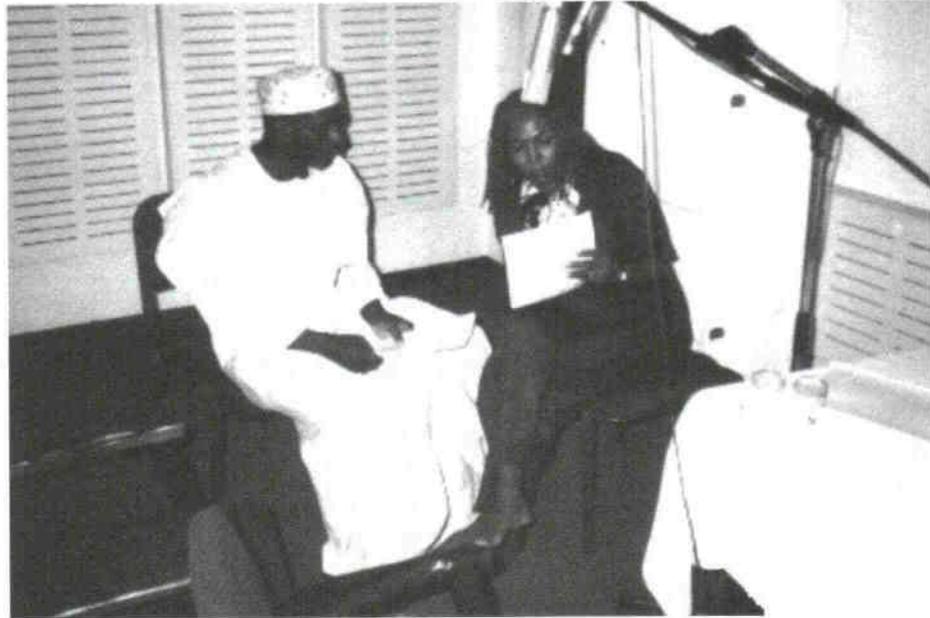
Studio rehearsal under way.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **Choosing the audio production house**

❖ **Requirements for the audio production house**

• **General requirements**

• **Resource requirements**

• **Personnel requirements**

Note: The remarks in this chapter are designed for recording studios that are not using digital and computerized recording systems.

Choosing the Audio Production House

Of paramount importance to the success of a radio serial drama is the quality of the production house that will produce and record the episodes. For the recording of the serial drama to be carried out efficiently and successfully, the production outlet (whether it be a government radio station or an independent production house) must be able to provide adequate resources, trained personnel, and sufficient, regularly scheduled studio time.

Requirements for the Audio Production House

If the project is working with a local government radio station, it is sometimes difficult to ask that certain resources and personnel be available, and this can result in delayed production or lack of appropriate standards. Where the project is working with an outside production house, it is easier to seek the fulfillment of certain requirements before signing the contract.

General Requirements

Initially, the program manager will make inquires about such matters as:

• The previous reputation and production record of the production house.

• The production house's previous experience with drama production. Today, most audio recording companies specialize in music recording and making commercials. The requirements for serial drama recording differ from both of these. Wherever possible, a company or radio station with previous experience in drama production should be chosen. If no such facility can be found, it may be necessary to contract with an experienced radio expert (local or international) to provide the director and technicians with some initial training in the best methodology for recording serial drama.

• The management background and stability (employee satisfaction and turnover) of the production house.

• The production house's number and types of clients.

- The agency philosophy, especially with regard to development programs.
- The production house's growth record.
- The production house's financial stability.
- The production house's willingness to consider, discuss and, where possible, accommodate realistic requests from the program manager with regard to production techniques.
- The production house's willingness to allow the program manager to attend recording sessions, and to allow a script monitor to sit in on all recording sessions. (The director has so many things to do at once during edit-free production that it is helpful to have a script monitor sit in on all recordings, listening to the actors, and watching the script very closely to ensure that no important words are missed or mistaken.)
- The flexibility of the production house. What is their willingness to adapt to new approaches or ideas?
- The production house's willingness to accept that they cannot change the script, and that any changes that seem essential for acting purposes must have prior approval from the program manager.
- The ability of the production house to dedicate the necessary time, on a regular basis, for the recording of the drama. Many small production houses are eager to accept all the work they can get, even if this means interrupting a previously arranged schedule. In the creation of an Enter-Educate serial drama, it is essential that the recording schedule be set and maintained (barring unforeseen inescapable difficulties). Agreement must be reached (and included in the contract) that the specified rehearsal, recording, and editing time will be held open for the project.

Resource Requirements

The following resources are needed in an audio production house when the edit-free production system is used:

- A studio that is sound proof and large enough. Many small audio production houses that specialize in music or commercials are not absolutely sound proof. For drama, the studio in which the actors work must have no sound leaks, and must have a door that can be locked from the inside so that accidental intruders can be kept out during recording. The sound quality can be checked by recording a short drama episode in the studio and then listening to the playback through headphones. Minor, but disruptive noises (such as a background hum from air conditioning or other equipment) that may not be heard while standing in the studio will be audible on the recording tape. Such noises are exaggerated when broadcast. They detract from the quality of the finished product and are irritating to the audience.

  Every episode of the serial drama is likely to involve a minimum of five actors. There may also be an assistant director in the studio at all times, so it is necessary to have enough room for all these people to be in the studio simultaneously.

- A sufficient number of microphones. It is possible to record with as many

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Production House Resource Requirements

1. Studio that is sound proof and large enough to accommodate several actors at once.

2. A sufficient number of microphones.

3. A well-equipped technical control room.

4. A portable reel-to-reel tape recorder.

5. Editing equipment.

6. Tape supplies.

7. Tape storage cans.

8. Rehearsal space.

9. Proximity to the project office.

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as six actors standing around one multi-directional microphone, but it is preferable to have no more than two actors sharing a microphone. The ideal situation is one microphone for each actor, so that each can be placed to accommodate the level of the particular actor's voice. This, however, is often an unrealistic expectation, but there must be a minimum of three microphones available for the actors in the studio. Also, it is helpful if each actor can have a headset so that the director can speak directly to him or her from the control room. Again, this is often not a practical request and can be overcome by having an assistant director in the studio receiving the director's comments through headphones and passing them on orally to the actors.

- Well-equipped technical control room. The control room should be:

  - Next to the studio in which the actors will be working, and have a window between the control room and the studio so that the director can see and direct the actors.

  - Equipped with a reel-to-reel tape recorder; one or two cassette recorder/players; a turn table; and a mixing board.

  - Large enough to accommodate a minimum of four people. These four people are the technician working the board and handling the recording machine, an assistant technician who will handle the sound effects and music tapes, the script monitor (from the program office), and the director. In some places, the director likes to have three technical assistants in the control room—one on the board, one in charge of the recording machine, and the third inserting music and sound effects from a cassette tape machine.

  - An intercom system, so that the director can speak directly to those in the soundproof studio.

  - A headset for the director so that he or she can be listening to the sound quality as recording takes place.

  - A music stand on which the director can set the script, so that both hands are free for directing, and so that the script does not get lost or out of order when the director puts it down.

- A portable reel-to-reel tape recorder for recording the master tape of each episode and for the collection of local sound effects. A cassette recorder can be used for sound effects recording, but reel-to-reel tape offers more flexibility in terms of keeping the master copy and making continuous sound beds.

- Editing equipment. Even when the edit-free system is being used and editing is kept to a minimum, there will be a need for a tape cutter and splicer and editing tape.

- Tape supplies. The production house should be prepared to have on hand all necessary tapes, both reel-to-reel and cassettes, at the outset of production, or to provide the program manager with a full list of tape needs that the project should supply. In order to ensure quality production, the program manager either should specify that new recording tape must be used, or supply the tape for recording and copying the

episodes on a program-by-program basis. There is a likelihood, otherwise, that the production house will use pre-used tapes to save expenses. Pre-used tape is often not completely clean and sound from previous recordings can leak through.

- Tape storage cans. The reel master tape of each completed program will be stored separately in its own marked can. This means there is a need for up to 52 storage cans or more, depending on the number of episodes in the serial drama.

- Rehearsal space. The actors will hold an off-microphone rehearsal prior to recording, preferably in the same locality as the recording studio. It is possible to hold the off-microphone rehearsal in the recording studio, but this usually means paying for extra studio time and getting in the way of studio set up.

- Location. If possible, the production house should be located in reasonable proximity to the project office to facilitate visits between staffs.

Personnel Requirements

The audio production house or radio station must be able to provide the following personnel:

- **Audio director** with previous experience directing drama. If no one with previous drama experience is available, then some training must be provided for a director who has other types of audio experience (such as directing commercials). This training can be provided best by arranging for the director to spend some time with a practicing drama director, even if this means a short visit to another country. The director must be willing to work under the supervision of the program manager and to abide by the established time line. The director must appreciate that she or he does not have the right to make any changes to the scripts during production, unless there is a serious difficulty with a word that an actor cannot pronounce comfortably. Difficulties like this should be discovered during the off-microphone rehearsal and referred to the program manager for final decisions.

    Enter-Educate serial drama cannot allow ad-libbing (changing words or lines during performance) by the actors. Ad-libbing can cause information to be delivered inconsistently, confusingly, or even incorrectly. The director should be aware of this and should agree (perhaps in the contract) to stick to the script at all times or refer to the program manager if changes seem essential.

    The program manager should meet personally with the audio director to explain the importance of his or her role and to discuss the working relationships that will exist among program manager, director, script monitor, actors, and script writer.

- **Assistant director.** In the production of a serial drama that will last over many months, it is advisable to have an assistant director, who—among other tasks—can stand in for the director in emergencies. The usual tasks of the assistant director are to assist with rehearsal and production, and to ensure that both the studio and the control room are correctly set up in advance of recording.

**Production House
Personnel Requirements**

1. Media director
2. Assistant director
3. Trained technicians
   (at least 2)
4. Actors
5. Musicians

Provision of Resources

In some countries, where there is a shortage of professional production houses, it can be difficult to find one that fulfills the necessary requirements. In such cases, it can be advantageous to arrange a contract that allows the funder to provide some studio resources or equipment as part payment for work done. If such a contract is to be organized, it should include a clause stating that the materials provided will remain the property of the project, until such time as the production house has completed its contract obligations to the satisfaction of the program manager.

- **Trained technicians.** These people will operate in the control room and at the editing board, and must be fully trained and experienced so that they can work quickly, accurately, and efficiently. There must be a sufficient number of technical staff and trained back-ups available in case of emergency. Sometimes the assistant director will be a trained technician and can carry out technician's duties in the event that one of the regular technicians is unavailable.

- **Actors.** The production house should provide a list of available actors (male and female) together with a notation of their previous acting experience. If it is found that few of them have previous experience in radio acting, it is wise to arrange a brief Radio Acting Workshop to provide some guidance. (See Chapter 8). An actors' meeting is held prior to the commencement of ongoing production, during which actors can be apprised of the aims and importance of the serial drama, and the value of the contribution they will be making.

- **Musicians.** If new music is to be created for the signature tune* and musical bridges** of serial drama, it might be advantageous to request the selected production house to undertake the writing, performing, and recording of it.

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*   The signature tune is the theme music that introduces and closes each episode of the serial.
**   Musical bridges are the brief interludes of music that can be used to divide one scene of the drama from the next.

Chapter Eight

Edit-Free Radio Production
and Acting
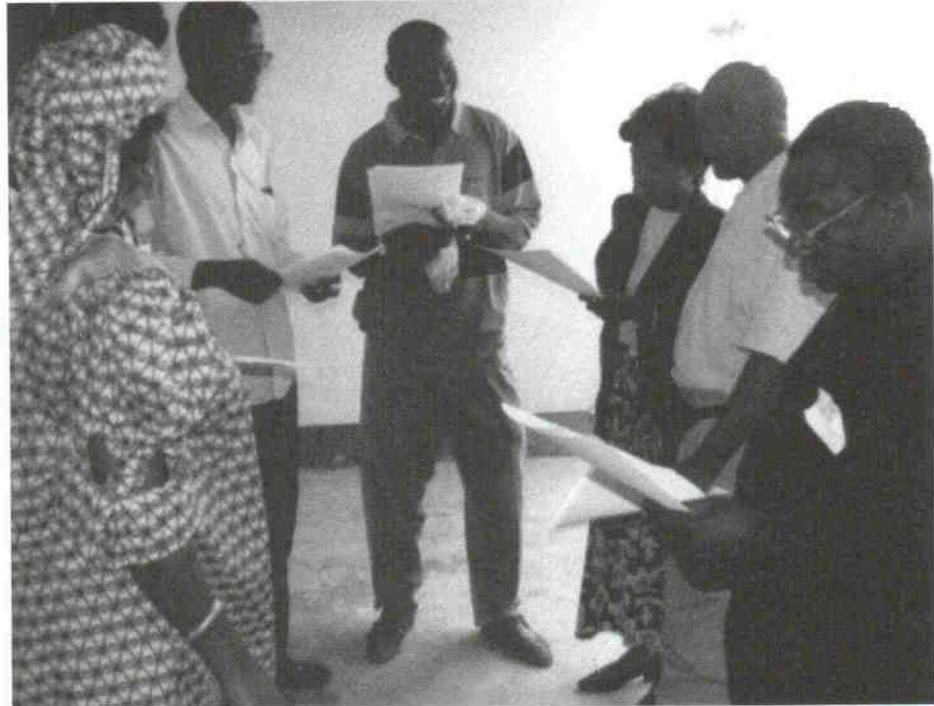
Actors must rehearse their roles thoroughly.

Topics in This Chapter

- ❖ **Explanation of edit-free production**
- ❖ **Advantages of edit-free production**
- ❖ **Steps that aid the edit-free production process**
- ❖ **Guidelines for actors**
- ❖ **The radio voice**

Explanation of Edit-Free Production

The primary aim of the production phase (recording and editing) of radio serial drama is to maintain professional acting and production standards while keeping to the established time line. In the interests of sustainability and institutionalization, the chosen production system should be one that can operate without a big budget and without equipment that is expensive to purchase, maintain, and replace.

In today's high-tech world, it is tempting for donor-aided projects to consider providing digital recording and computerized editing equipment for the serial drama production. Such equipment creates its own difficulties in terms of cost and training, upkeep, and sustainability. It is often better to use simple reel-to-reel or cassette recording and employ the edit-free production system that was always used in the heyday of radio serial dramas, and which is still highly efficient today. Even recording studios already using digital recording and computer editing equipment should give serious consideration to using the edit-free system rather than the time consuming post-editing method.

The edit-free system does not eliminate editing entirely, but it does cut down dramatically on the time and expense incurred by the usual post-editing procedures, without sacrificing standards. In this system, editing takes place during recording so that the program is virtually ready for broadcasting at the end of the recording session.

The edit-free system is contrary to most modern audio recording practices in technocratic countries, where a great deal of time and money is put into post-editing. In such production, if mistakes are made in the performance during recording, they are left on the tape and edited out later. Sound effects, music, and the fading in and out of voices are edited in *after* the recording session. This approach is perfectly acceptable for short recordings such as commercials or for complex musical recordings where complicated sound mixing is required, but it is often inefficient and unnecessarily expensive for a serial drama. Certainly for a serial that is to be

broadcast at the rate of five or six episodes a week, the demands of post-production editing are unrealistic. Finding time to keep up with the editing often creates problems, and frequently unedited programs pile up waiting for editing time and resources, or for someone to record the necessary sound effects. As a result, tapes are mislaid or confused with other tapes or recorded over, and in no time at all there is an almost insurmountable back log. Consequently, programs are edited hastily and carelessly at the last minute to meet the broadcast deadline or they go on the air unedited.

The edit-free system operates differently. Sound effects (which have been collected ahead of time) and music (which has been chosen or composed ahead of the recording date) are put in during the voice recording session. If mistakes are made by the actors, the director stops the recording and has the technician erase the mistake right away by rewinding the recording tape to a point immediately prior to the mistake. Then, at the director's command, actors pick up at the point where the mistake was made and recording continues.

At the end of the recording session, minimal editing may be needed to remove any short moments of silence that might have occurred between the time when the technician began to re-roll the tape after an error and the actors began to speak again.

Advantages of Edit-Free Production

The edit-free system offers quality advantages to production, as well as advantages of time and money saving. It has been found that actors generally give a better performance when they can hear, at the time of recording, the sound effects to which they are supposed to be reacting. When an actor has to *come into* or *move away from* the microphone (to indicate entering or leaving a room), it is easier for the actor to do this physically at the time of recording than it is to edit in the fading or amplifying voice electronically at a later time. It seems that using the edit-free method gives the actors a strong sense of living their roles in the same way that stage acting does.

With edit-free production, a 15—20 minute drama episode can be fully recorded in two hours—from final rehearsal to completion of the master tape. The recording crew may require more time than this when they first try edit-free production, but once they and the actors are accustomed to the methods, it becomes both easy and quick.

Edit-free production is possible, however, only when all steps in the production process are well organized.

Steps That Aid The Edit-Free Production Process

1. **Script layout.** It is essential that each script be laid out on the pages in an organized manner, such as that recommended in Chapter 5 of this book. This makes it possible for music and sound effects to be prepared ahead of time, actors to be fully rehearsed, and the director to cue actors and technicians quickly during recording.

2. **Sound effects collection.** As soon as the overall script treatment has been completed, the writer should give the director some indication of the types of sound effects that are likely to be needed so that the collection and logging of sounds can be undertaken well ahead of the commencement of episode recording. Sound effects recording should be done by a highly trained sound engineer, using the best available recording equipment. During the recording of sound effects, it might be necessary to use a microphone baffle to prevent the inadvertent recording of other background sounds. Sound effects can be stored in one of two ways: on cartridge tapes to be used in a cartridge machine; or on short (5-minute) cassette tapes.

   In either case, they must be clearly labeled so they are ready for use during recording sessions.

3. **Labeling of storage boxes.** Each completed recorded episode will be stored in a separate tape box. Time and confusion can be saved by preparing in advance the labels for these boxes. Each label should state the name of the serial, the name of the organizations producing it, the episode number, and a space where the broadcast date can be entered when it has been determined. The assistant director can take charge of these labels and be sure that the correct label is affixed to each box as soon as the completed tape is put in it.

4. **Actor training.** Before ongoing recording of episodes begins, actors must be trained in how to prepare and handle the script pages, how to mark their lines, rehearse their lines aloud before coming to the studio rehearsal, follow acting directions that the writer has given in parentheses at the beginning of or within their speeches, and pay close attention to the director at all times. (Guidelines for actors are given later in this chapter.)

5. **Acting rehearsal.** The director should hold a full off-microphone rehearsal in advance of the recording of each episode. If the actors have received their scripts in advance, rehearsed them at home on their own, and then completed a full script rehearsal prior to going into the recording studio, the chances of errors during recording are greatly reduced and time is saved.

6. **Studio preparation.** While the actors are doing their off-microphone rehearsal with the director, the assistant director and the control room technicians can prepare everything for the recording session. This will include:

- Setting up the microphones, preferably one for each actor, and ensuring that each microphone is properly plugged in and working. For drama recording, it is better to have actors stand rather than sit at the microphones. This enables them to move away from and toward the microphone as the script requires. Standing also avoids the risk of unnecessary noise that can occur if actors are moving chairs or accidentally bumping a table with their hands or legs.

- Installing and testing headsets for each actor (if these are to be used), so that the actors can receive instruction straight from the director. If there are not enough headsets to allow one for each actor, then provision should be made for the assistant director to be in the studio during recording and to be wearing a headset through which to receive instructions from the director in the control room. It is then the assistant director's job to pass these instructions to the actor. The assistant director should have a music stand on which to place the script so that script pages can be turned easily and noiselessly during production. The stand also helps ensure pages of the script cannot be lost, dropped, or muddled.

- Readying *live* sound effects in the studio. Many sound effects do not need to be recorded, but can be made in the studio by an assistant. Such effects as the rattling of tea cups, the sound of a bicycle bell, the sound of footsteps on a wooden floor and the pouring of drinks can be made live in the studio. Studios that frequently record serial drama are equipped with standard props that can be used for regularly used sound effects—such as a door in a frame that can be opened or closed as needed, and a window that can be raised or lowered. In the heyday of radio serial drama many other props were included as stock-in-trade for the production studio, such as coconut shells to bump together to make the sounds of galloping hooves; bamboo stalks filled with small pebbles to jiggle for the sound of rain; and a fan facing towards a sheet of thin tin foil to create various levels of wind noise. These and many other convincing sounds can be made just as easily today with a little imagination and at a great saving of money.

  However the live sound effects are to be made, the director must be sure to nominate the actor or technical assistant who is to provide the required sound at the appropriate place in the script.

7. **Control room preparation.** Certain tasks must be undertaken to prepare the control room for the recording session:

   - The mixing board should be cleaned so that it is entirely free of dust. Eating, drinking, and smoking should never be allowed in the control room, since these activities can cause damage to the sensitive equipment too easily.

   - All equipment should be tested to ensure that it is plugged in correctly and working.

   - The sound effects and music tapes to be used in the recording must be compiled in the order listed by the writer on the cover page of the

script. (See script cover sheet sample on page 63.) In some studios, the music and sound effects will be fed into the master tape from two different cassette players: one for sound effects; one for music.

In that case, sound effects tapes must be stacked beside the sound effects cassette player in the order in which they will be used (with the first effect to be used on the top of the stack of tapes). Music tapes will be stacked similarly beside the music cassette player. All cassettes must be cued to exactly the point at which they are needed. If a particular cassette is to be used more than once in a given episode, some directors like to place a piece of brightly colored paper in the stack at the point where the cassette will be required the second time. Then, immediately after the first use of a cassette, it is re-cued to the right place and reinserted into the stack where the colored paper is.

- The technician should make a last minute check with the script to be sure that all effects and music are ready and in the correct order.

- The director's script stand (usually a music stand) and headset, and the chief technician's headset, should be placed in the correct positions in the control room. The position should ensure that the director can see all the actors (where possible), and at least the assistant director in the studio. This position is particularly important in cases of restricted control room or studio space.

  When recording is about to begin, the control room should be cleared of everyone except the director, the technicians appointed to work on the recording, and the script monitor (where one is used). It is virtually impossible for the director to maintain production quality if there are people coming in and going out of the control room—even if they are there just out of interest in the program. Similarly, there should be no telephone in the control room during recording sessions. Interruption of any type deters continuity and adds to production costs. Recording sessions should be considered as being similar to stage production where no interruptions to the performance are expected or tolerated.

8. **Voice levels are taken.** When the off-microphone rehearsal is completed and the studio and control room are ready, the technician places all actors at their appointed microphones and checks their voice levels. This means that the technician in the control room listens to each voice through the microphone to ensure that it is coming through clearly. Some actors who have difficulty with plosive or sibilant sounds might have to be given microphones that are specially filtered to correct sound distortion. Where filters or baffles are not available, actors with voice sounds that distort through the microphone should be shown how to speak across rather than directly at the microphone. (See Guidelines for Actors later in this chapter.)

   In studios that cannot provide a separate microphone for each actor, it probably will be necessary to give actors who share microphones an indication of where each of them must stand in relation to the shared

microphone. This can be done by placing the actor correctly for the best voice level and then putting a strip of masking tape on the floor to show where he or she should stand when using that microphone. This helps prevent the necessity of stopping the recording to refix sound positions each time a different actor steps up to the microphone.

While voice levels are being taken, the assistant director can check to ensure that none of the actors has script pages stapled together. As indicated in the Guidelines for Actors section, scripts should be unstapled and unclipped when the actors go to the microphone so that pages can be moved easily and quietly.

9. **Air conditioning.** Any noisy equipment in or near the studio should be turned off immediately prior to recording, if necessary.

In some older or less well equipped studios, air conditioners are excessively noisy. This noise can have a bad effect on the recorded sound quality if left on during recording. Obviously, turning off the air conditioning will result in the studio becoming extremely hot and airless since a sound-proofed studio has no outside air or windows. It is important, therefore, to ensure that everything is ready before recording commences, to enable the session to move quickly and smoothly and protect the actors from discomfort.

Most directors like to record one scene of an episode at a time, so that only the actors from that scene need to be in the studio during recording. At the end of each scene, the tape is stopped and there is a brief pause while the actors from the finished scene leave the studio and those from the next scene come in. This practice makes it unnecessary for actors to stay in the stuffy studio for too long at one stretch. If necessary, the air conditioning or fans can be turned on briefly during the scene change.

10. **The studio door.** When recording is about to begin, the studio door is locked from the inside so that no one can enter inadvertently and cause interruption that will necessitate a retake of a scene. Every recording studio and control room should be fitted with a warning sign (RECORDING IN PROGRESS) above the door that lights up when the control panel is switched on. In some places, however, these signs and lights have never been installed or have ceased to work, so locking the studio door is often the only way to prevent unwanted intrusion during recording.

11. **The tape is slated.** As recording begins, the tape is slated. Someone—usually the assistant director or the technician—reads the name of the serial, the episode number, and perhaps the recording date, onto the beginning of the tape. This is for identification purposes, so that when the tape goes to the radio station to be aired, the broadcast technician has a final way of checking that the tape is the correct one.

12. **The standard opening is copied onto the tape.** As discussed in Chapter 6, most serials use a standard announcement at the beginning and end of every episode, giving the names of those organizations that are sponsoring the serial and any other standard announcements. Rather

than re-recording these announcements for every episode, they can be recorded once and copied on to the beginning and end of each episode.

13. **Necessary editing.** Immediately after the completion of recording, necessary editing is done. Usually this is a simple task of closing any silences that were created as retakes were recorded.

14. **The finished tape.** The finished tape is stored in a tape box and marked with the program name and number and an indication of whether it has been rewound (tails in) or not (tails out). This notation is made to ensure that when the tape arrives at the broadcast station, it will be checked before playing to be sure it has been rewound, and will not be put on the air backwards!

15. **The director's script is filed.** The director's script should have noted on it all approved changes or cuts that were made during production. This script is then marked "PRODUCTION COPY" and filed in the project archives. If any question arises at any time about the information contained in the broadcast, it can be checked against this archive script copy.

16. **Cassette copies are made from the master tape as required.** It is a cassette copy rather than the master tape that is used for broadcasting.

Guidelines for Actors

The following guidelines can be reproduced (photocopied) and distributed as stand-alone material to actors or used as the basis for an actor's workshop. The workshop can be run by the program manager, or the audio director, or both together. Much of the information presented is distilled from what is already contained in earlier parts of this book.

Introducing Radio Acting

What is an actor? An actor is a person who acts as, or pretends to be, another person (a character) in a dramatic performance. Actors perform in stage plays, in street drama, in films and television, and on radio. In some countries actors are referred to as artists. The term actor is more specific, however, because the word artist can refer to anyone who performs: musician, dancer, juggler, etc. Actor refers only to be people who act out the roles of characters in drama.

Introducing the Enter-Educate Serial Drama Format

1. **What is Enter-Educate serial drama?** Enter-Educate is a combination of two English words: entertainment and education. Serial drama is a form of radio drama that continues over many months with one episode of the drama being broadcast each week. So, Enter-Educate serial drama is a form of drama that both entertains and educates the audience over a period of months or years.

    Serial drama is entertaining because it tells stories about believable

people who have difficult problems in their lives and how they overcome their problems. Serial drama is entertaining because it engages the emotions of the listeners. It gives them the chance to love, to hate, to laugh, to be afraid, and to experience tragedy and triumph.

Serial drama educates when important social messages are incorporated in the story, and when the characters provide role models for the audience; people they admire and would like to emulate.

You may have heard serial drama referred to as soap opera. An opera is a form of drama set to music. Opera is always very exciting, and the story and the characters are often exaggerated. Radio soap opera is not set to music, but the stories are often exaggerated and always exciting. When radio serial dramas were first produced in America, they were sponsored by big soap manufacturing companies, and so they became known as soap operas or soaps.

2. **Why is your job as a radio serial drama actor so important?** As a serial drama actor, you are a very important member of your community. Serial drama can change people's attitudes and behavior, and allow them to improve the standard and the quality of their lives. The more convincing you are as an actor, the greater chance your audience has of believing what your character is telling them and of changing their lives for the better.

3. **Does Enter-Educate serial drama require more than normal acting?** Yes. As an Enter-Educate serial drama actor you must be part actor and part teacher. You must be able to act very well so that your listeners believe in the character you are portraying. You must also understand how to present important information clearly and carefully so that your audience can hear it, understand it, and remember it.

Preparing for Your Part

The following guidelines will help you do the very best job you can as an Enter-Educate serial drama actor:

1. **Understand the purpose and objectives of the Enter-Educate series.** Your director will hold a meeting at which the program manager will speak to you about the serial drama series. Be sure you fully understand what the programs are trying to achieve. *For example*, many Enter-Educate programs are about family planning and reproductive health. A Nigerian serial called *Four Is Our Choice*, designed for the general public, had the objective of demonstrating that having a well-planned family can lead to a better quality of life. Part of having a well-planned family is choosing how many children you will have and how far apart you will have them. This radio serial drama was designed to encourage listeners to believe that they can improve their own lives by planning their families, and that they should go to their health post for advice and counseling.

If you do not believe what the serial drama is teaching, and you think you could not be sincere in acting the part of a character who is spreading this message, you should not accept a part in the drama.

2. **Study your script carefully and thoroughly.** You will be given your script

several days before the recording takes place. As soon as you receive the script, do the following things:

- **Check to be sure you have ALL the pages.** You will notice that every page is numbered in the top right hand corner. You will see both the number of the particular page, and the total number of pages in the script: page 2 of 10; page 6 of 10; etc. The numbers are written this way so that it is easy for you to make sure that you have ALL the pages in the script.

- **Mark every speech that you will have to read.** You can do this in one of two ways: You can underline the name of your character each time it appears; or you can use a highlight marker to highlight every one of your speeches.

- **Do not staple the pages of your script together.** Use a paper clip to hold pages together, or put them in a ring binder until you come to the studio. Pages that are stapled together make a lot of noise as you are turning them over in front of the microphone. If your script comes to you stapled, remove the staples before you start reading through the script.

- **Study the OBJECTIVES of the program,** which will be listed on the cover page of your script. The objectives will help you understand the MESSAGE that the program is trying to teach, and this will help you understand how to stress or focus your lines.

- **Study the WHOLE script thoroughly.** Be sure you understand ALL of it, not just your speeches. If there is anything you do not understand, put a mark beside it, and remember to talk to the director about it during rehearsal.

- **Read all your speeches ALOUD several times,** so you feel comfortable with them. Put in whatever diction marks you think are necessary to help you read the speech better. (You will find out more about "diction marks" later in this manual.)

  Remember, in Enter-Educate serial drama you MUST NOT change a single word of the script. You may not ad-lib in an Enter-Educate serial drama. The information in this type of program has been very carefully prepared by experts in the field. Ad-libbing or altering the script in the studio could destroy the accuracy or consistency of the message content that the serial drama wants to bring to the audience.

  If you have a question or concern about any one of your speeches, put a mark beside it and discuss it with the director before the group rehearsal starts.

- **Notice if there will be any sound effects playing during any of your speeches.** Consider the difference these sound effects might make to the way you present your lines.

- **Remember at all times that the director's decision is final.** You must abide by what he/she tells you to do. If you disagree with the director's ideas you may, of course, discuss them with him/her, but in

the long run it is the director who makes the final decision.

- **Believe in your character.** Even if you don't particularly LIKE the character you are playing, you must understand her/him and believe that you really are that person as you read the lines.

3. **Eliminate paper noise.** Stage actors have to learn all their lines. Radio actors do not. They can read from the script, but the script causes problems of its own, because the noise of the paper can be heard through the microphone. You must learn to handle the script pages very carefully. Some rules for handling the script:

- Never staple the pages together. Turning over stapled pages is very noisy. Do not clip the pages together in any way. Separate the page you are reading from the rest of the pages. Hold the page you are reading in front of you with one hand. Hold the other pages all together in the other hand. When you finish the separated page, lower all the pages away from the microphone, and slip the page you have finished reading behind the others. Separate the next page and hold it in one hand away from the other pages.

  Some actors prefer to drop the page they have just read onto the floor. That can work when there are just two or three people around the microphone, but it is noisy if you have a lot of actors moving around.

  If you are going to drop your pages, make sure you have your name on every page of the script, so that you can easily find YOUR page with your lines marked, if you have to re-record any part of the script.

- Keep your script at microphone level. Do not look DOWN as you read your script or your voice will not be clear. At the same time, do not put the script between your face and the microphone. It should be a little bit to one side of you, so your voice can reach the microphone directly.

- Keep the script from touching things around you. Do not let your script bump into the microphone, the microphone stand, or another actor.

4. **Stand up.** In general, it is better to stand up while you are recording Enter-Educate programs. There are several reasons for this:

- You can share a microphone. An Enter-Educate serial drama usually uses six or more actors in each episode. Most studios do not have enough microphones to give each actor an individual microphone. It is much easier to share a microphone if you are standing up, because you can move into and away from the microphone easily when it is your turn.

The Golden Rules of Enter-Educate Serial Drama Acting

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1. Understand the importance of the serial drama to the lives of the listeners.

2. Rehearse your part thoroughly.

3. Be on time for all rehearsals and all recording sessions.

4. Do not ad-lib or alter any part of your script.

5. Remember that the director is in charge. The director has the last word.

Box 8

- You will probably feel more lively and energetic when standing up, and so you will give a better performance.
- You are less likely to bump into other actors with your script pages if you can step away from the microphone as soon as your speech is finished.

Edit-Free Recording

When you are acting in an Enter-Educate serial drama, you will probably be asked to do what is called edit-free or *live* recording. That means that the recording is done as much as possible like a live stage performance or a direct broadcast with minimum post-editing.

Post-recording editing is expensive and time consuming. The cost of editing all the programs in a year-long serial drama can be prohibitive. For this reason, in edit-free recording, mistakes are edited out in the studio as they are made.

Making a Mistake While Recording

If you make a mistake during recording, just keep going until the director tells you to stop. When you are stopped, the director will tell the technician to roll back the tape, and then tell you to start reading again at a certain line. Notice that every page of your script is numbered, and every line on each page is numbered. This makes it easy for the director to tell you where he wants you to start. *For example*, he might say, "Start again on page three, line four...and wait for my cue." The director will cue you, usually with a hand movement, when the tape is ready and you can start reading again. You are much less likely to make mistakes if you have marked your script correctly and rehearsed it thoroughly.

Sound Effects During Recording

In edit-free recording, sound effects are almost always added during the recording session, rather than being edited in later. *For example:* If you are acting in a scene that takes place in a health post, the technician will play a pre-recorded background sound of health post ambience while you are reading your lines. Usually, the director will arrange for you to hear this background sound in the studio as you are reading. You will probably find this is an advantage because it gives you a greater sense of reality.

Some sound effects, especially continuous background sound, will be taken from a recording. Others will be done in the studio. Such sounds as a door banging, or a person drinking, or pouring tea can easily be done in the studio, and very often actors are asked to assist with these sound effects.

The Radio Voice

Radio acting is very different from stage acting. On the stage, you act for a large audience, and for an audience that can SEE you. On the stage, you use your whole body to convey the message. On the stage, you use a BIG voice—a voice that carries and can be heard from all directions Stage acting is big acting. Radio acting is small acting. Your audience cannot see you. They must understand everything through your voice. When you act on radio, you should imagine that you are speaking to only one person, as if you were having a one-on-one conversation. Your voice must be clear, and you must pronounce all your words carefully, but you should not shout or make your voice too loud.

When you act on radio, you do not turn toward the person you are speaking to as you would on the stage. You speak into the microphone at all times—with one exception. If the script says that you should "turn away" or "leave the room," you turn your head away from the microphone as you speak. Sometimes, you may have to walk away from the microphone as you speak.

Possible Voice Problems

The microphone is very sensitive and picks up sounds that our ears do not normally hear. You should listen to your own recorded voice and find out if you have any words or sounds that do not come through clearly on the microphone.

"S" sound. The sound of the letter "s" can be a problem for some actors. We do not really hear the hissing sound of the letter "s" in everyday speech. We certainly DO hear it through the microphone.

The problem of the "s" sound can be overcome by speaking slightly sideways, *across the microphone*. You can also overcome this difficulty by practicing words with the "s" sound in them. Make the "s" quieter than usual.

Plosive letters. There are some letters we call plosives (because they sound like an explosion). These letters in the English language are p,b,d,t and they can cause real problems. Through the microphone, they can come out with a loud popping sound. There is a difficulty with some plosive sounds in every language. The radio director and actors should determine which sounds are likely to cause these problems in their own language.

You can overcome this problem by putting more accent on the second letter of the word and less on the first: petrol becomes p<u>e</u>trol. In severe cases, the popping sound can be further reduced by speaking *across the microphone*, rather than directly at it.

Losing the ends of words. When we listen to people in everyday life, we see their faces. We understand what people say because we hear them with our ears, and we also see their faces and their mouths with our eyes. We *see* what people say as much as we *hear* what they say.

Listeners cannot see the face of the radio actor. They can only hear the voice. So your voice must be a little bit clearer than normal. It is most

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important to complete every word. Do not run words together as we often do in everyday speech.

Losing the ends of sentences. In normal speech, many people lower their voices toward the ends of sentences. We hardly notice this in everyday conversation because we can see the person talking to us. We know that even though the voice is quieter, the person is not walking away from us. On the radio, however, there is a problem. A voice that loses strength or fades out suggests that the speaker is moving away. For normal radio speaking, keep your voice on the same level right to the end of each sentence.

Speaking too quickly. When you act in an educational radio program, you should speak a little more slowly than normal. Your listeners need time to take in the new ideas the program is teaching. Do not take the speech too slowly, but say the words with a little more emphasis than usual.

Using different voices. It is very helpful for every radio actor to have two or three different voices. Perhaps you can make your voice sound like a very old person, like a child, or like someone from another part of the country or another part of the world. Practice your different voices until they become easy for you. You may be called upon at times to act the role of more than one character.

Emphasis. In educational radio, it is sometimes necessary to give special emphasis to words or sentences. On the stage, you can give emphasis by saying the words loudly. This is not good on radio, because the microphone distorts loud sounds.

On radio, you can give emphasis by leaving a little space on each side of the word or phrase you want to emphasize.

Example: There are...four...facts I want you to remember.

Sometimes, the script writer will show you where to put emphasis by putting dots before and after the word—as in the example above.

Diction marks (speaking marks). These are also marks you can put into your speeches yourself to help you remember when to divide a word so it is easier to understand or easier to pronounce. You can also use these marks to indicate when you want to emphasize one particular word in the sentence. The marks are like this: //. They are called diction marks and you put them into your script while you are rehearsing.

Example: (Breaking up a long or difficult word).
It is dis//ad//van//tage//ous to have too many students in one class.

Example: (Emphasis) I would rather//die//than go through//that experience//again.

You can also use these marks to break up a very long speech.

Example:

You will have to break up the following speech if you want your listening audience to understand it.

On this day, which was, after all, one of the most important days of the year, being as it was the President's birthday, the school children always gathered in the town square for an early morning parade.

You could put diction marks in this speech in the following way to assist you to read the speech clearly:

On this day,// which was,// after all,// one of the most important days of the year,// being as it was the President's birthday,// the school children always gathered// in the town square// for an early morning parade.

Acting for interactive radio instruction

1. **What is interactive radio instruction?** Interactive Radio Instruction is a type of distance education (education where the students and teacher are not at the same location) where the radio takes the place of the teacher, and the listeners (whether they are children or adults) are the students. Interactive Radio Instruction, as its name suggests, keeps the listening students actively involved with the radio program. The radio teacher asks questions to which the listening students must respond, either by giving oral answers, writing, carrying out an activity, or holding a discussion.

2. **What are the special needs of an actor in an interactive radio instruction program?** The most important task of the actor in an interactive radio instruction program is to remember that the listeners are trying to learn from the program. The actor must have a lively, interesting voice, and be aware all the time that she/he is assisting the listeners to learn.

   The actor in interactive radio instruction must also be ready to leave the appropriate PAUSE FOR LISTENER RESPONSE (PLR) see example next page, and to give an enthusiastic, clear response after each pause.

3. **How can I best help the listeners?** As an actor in interactive radio instruction programs, you can give the best help to your listeners if you make sure that you really understand the teaching aims and objectives of the serial drama as a whole and of each individual episode in which you take part. Enunciate questions and answers very clearly and believe in yourself as a teacher as well as an actor.

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INTERACTIVITY EXAMPLE:

MODERATOR: So now, my friend, we have heard how the health worker made his clients very comfortable. He invited them to ask questions, and he gave them good clear answers to their questions. Let's be sure that we, as health workers, could answer these questions, too. So now, my friends, tell me: How often must a woman have the injection of Depo Provera?

PLR :05

MODERATOR: Every three months. Right. And now, tell me, is the injectable mostly used for spacing births or for limiting births?

PLR :05

MODERATOR: For spacing births. Yes. And here's our last question. Dear listeners, please tell me: Where are injectables available?

PLR :05

MODERATOR: Hospitals, health posts, and health centers. That is the right answer. I hope you were able to answer all those questions as well as Ram Krishna did.

The Rewards of Enter-Educate Serial Drama Acting

1. You get to know your character well. As you act the part of the same character in many programs, you get to know that character well, and acting the part becomes easier and easier. You also get to know all the other characters in the story, and as you work together, you will find that your acting job becomes easier and more interesting.

2. You know that your acting is helping a great many people to gain a better understanding of life and how to improve it.

3. You get paid!

Chapter Nine

Preventing Problems

Regular meetings can prevent problems before they happen.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The major check list**

❖ **Guidelines for preventing problems and maintaining the time line**

The Major Check List

A project of the size and complexity of an Enter-Educate radio serial drama can provide ample opportunity for problems to occur. One of the program manager's most important and most challenging tasks is to find and employ methods of *problem control.* Perhaps the most important first step in problem control is the establishment of a major check list showing the essential steps and tasks to be accomplished. This check list should be displayed prominently and all those involved with the project should become acquainted with those parts of the list that are their responsibility. What follows is a typical **major check list,** but it should be remembered that the check list for each project will be different from all others. The program manager and staff must determine all the details essential for the completion of their own project.

In the following example, the **DONE** column can be used for entering the date at which once-only activities have been completed (such as the conducting and analyzing of the pilot tests). The **FOLLOW-UP** column is used to record comments on how to bring a particular activity back on track, or other steps still to be undertaken to complete the activity.

MAJOR CHECK LIST

	FOLLOW-UP	DONE

PREPARATION

Broadcast start-up date and overall project duration established.		
Choice of broadcast outlet (radio station) made. Contact made with other organizations (NGOs) engaged in similar projects to discuss how projects can work together.		
Availability of resources for listeners (e.g., contraceptives) determined.		
All necessary staff hired.		
Budget established.		
Production houses researched for adequate resources.		
Availability of local writing and acting talent explored.		
Possible frequency of broadcast and duration of each episode researched with broadcast outlet.		
Preliminary agreement reached with broadcast outlet, with regard to availability of time and estimates of cost.		

DESIGN

Date set for design workshop.		
Design workshop site chosen and reserved.		
Design team chosen and invited to design workshop.		
Preparations for design workshop completed.		
Design workshop held.		
Writer auditions completed; writer chosen.		
Review panel selected. Initial review panel meeting held.		
Design document completed.		
Design document signing ceremony held (if required).		
Training needs established and training for writer organized if needed.		

PILOT TESTING

Pilot test sites selected and arranged.		
Pilot test dates established and pilot audiences invited for those dates.		
Story treatment (synopsis) and character profiles completed by writer.		
Story treatment and character profiles reviewed by review panel and adjusted by writer as necessary.		
Pilot episodes written.		
Pilot support materials prepared.		
Pilot test episodes and support materials reviewed.		
Pilot test episodes and support materials revised as needed.		
Pilot test episodes recorded.		
Pilot test questions prepared and reviewed.		
Pilot tests carried out (with writer present).		
Pilot test results compiled immediately after pilot tests.		
Pilot test results reviewed by program manager, writer, and review team. Decisions made with regard to changes to be incorporated in future scripts and support materials.		
Time line completed and agreed upon.		

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	FOLLOW-UP	DONE
WRITING		
Writer visits audience and compiles detailed audience profiles to assist in story development.		
Regular meeting times established with writer, editor (where necessary), and director.		
Big board, or other script monitoring device is set up.		
Script pages with headers, script cover pages, and review pages prepared.		
Writer training under way (as needed).		
Writer establishes regular writing schedule and begins writing episodes.		
Regular review routine established.		
Regular routine established for typing, translation, and copying.		
Original music (if desired) commissioned and written, preferably in time to go with pilot episodes.		
Ongoing preparation of support materials is under way.		
Art work for support and promotional materials commissioned.		
Promotional materials under development (making use of same musicians and artists as those used for episodes and support materials).		
CONTRACTS		
Production house contract prepared and approved.		
Production house contract signed.		
Writer(s) contract prepared and approved.		
Writer(s) contract signed.		
Actors' contracts prepared and approved.		
Actors' contracts signed.		
Evaluation contract prepared and approved.		
Evaluation organization signed.		
PRODUCTION		
Regular actors auditioned and contracted.		
Actor training workshop held.		
Recording schedule fully established and approved by program manager and director.		
Training for production staff (if required) is completed.		
Script monitor appointed if needed.		
Storage cans labeled ready to receive finished recorded episodes.		
Sound effects are recorded in the field and compiled and logged ready for use.		
Check is made that all necessary recording equipment is available and in good working order.		
Necessary tapes and cans are ordered and received.		
Opening and closing announcements recorded on master tape.		
Director receives approved episode scripts on time regularly.		
Actors receive scripts regularly several days ahead of rehearsal time.		
Regular recording under way.		

	FOLLOW-UP	DONE
All episodes recorded, edited, boxed, and labeled on time.		
Master tape copied ready for studio use.		
Archive script (used by director during recording) is labeled and stored.		
Promotional and publicity materials ready.		
Broadcasting arrangements (dates and times) are reconfirmed with broadcast outlet.		
Support materials are delivered to distribution points. Promotional and publicity activities begin and continue on time.		
Recorded episodes are delivered to the broadcast outlet on time. Broadcast outlet broadcasts correct episode on time every time.		

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

	FOLLOW-UP	DONE
Audience pre-testing designed (where this has not been done previously in the analysis stage).		
Audience pre-testing is carried out.		
Results of audience pre-testing are tabulated.		
Monitoring sites and monitoring methods are established.		
Monitoring begins and is ongoing.		
Results of monitoring is tabulated. Where necessary, changes are recommended by the program manager to the writer for future episodes.		
Arrangements are made for summative evaluation (post-tests).		
Summative evaluation carried out.		
Results of summative evaluation are compiled. Publicity and advocacy for the series is ongoing.		
Reports are prepared and distributed showing all aspects of project and its results and lessons learned.		
Arrangements are made for the continuation of the series if necessary (at least six months prior to end of current broadcasting).		

Guidelines for Preventing Problems and Maintaining the Time Line

1. **Allow sufficient start-up time.** At least six months—preferably more— should be allowed from the time of the decision to institute an Enter-Educate serial drama project to the commencement of script writing. This means six months of intense and continuous work, rather than doing a little bit about the project once a week or every few weeks. The task list in Chapter 1 can be used as a guide to those things which must be accomplished within the first six months, but in every situation there will be extra tasks that need to be accomplished. The list is always longer—never shorter.

2. **Ensure that all personnel can work to the designated time line.** Remember—the very first time script writing or reviewing or recording falls behind deadline, the program manager should discuss the problem with those concerned, and find a way of making it possible for the deficit to be made up. Permitting the time line to slip once is obvious encouragement for permitting it to happen again.

3. **Encourage professionalism.** Professionalism must be encouraged in all those who are involved with the project, including writers, actors, and musicians. A big part of developing project sustainability is building a sense of personal professional pride in those engaged in the project. A bulletin board, displaying the "PROFESSIONAL OF THE MONTH" has been found beneficial in some projects. Similarly, an occasional one-day professional advocacy workshop can assist all those in the project to understand the meaning and value of professionalism and how to achieve it in their work.

Establishing the type of **professional contracts** discussed earlier in this book with everyone involved in the project also can be helpful. The question of penalties or incentives often arises in the consideration of contracts related to the creation of Enter-Educate serial drama. Decisions about whether or not to impose penalties for unmet contractual obligations can be made only on an individual project basis and in the context of local conditions. While the inclusion of penalties for late, incomplete, or below standard work certainly encourages professionalism, it is unacceptable in some cultures. If penalties are to be included in the contracts, then the program manager is under strong obligations to ensure that nothing on the project side makes it impossible or even difficult for contractors to live up to their obligations. The program manager also should take on the responsibility of being alert to any impending contract breaches and make efforts to assist the contractors to avoid incurring penalties, and encourage them to obtain the offered incentives.

4. **Discourage the practice of one person doing two major tasks.** It usually does not work well to have the same person undertake two major tasks, such as both the writing of the scripts and the directing of the recording. Where there are two different people performing these tasks, one can keep professional pressure on the other. The studio director can hardly complain to the writer about late scripts if they are one and the same person.

5. **Arrange necessary training in advance.** As earlier chapters have suggested, possible areas for training are:
   - script writing for Enter-Educate serials
   - edit-free production
   - radio acting.

Sometimes, it is necessary to bring in consultants for these training activities and it is as well to establish dates as far in advance as possible to ensure that consultants are available.

Guidelines for Preventing Problems and Maintaining the Time Line

1. Allow sufficient start-up time.
2. Ensure that all personnel can work to the designated time line.
3. Encourage professionalism at all levels of the project.
4. Discourage one person from holding two important jobs.
5. Arrange necessary training.
6. Build in fall-back days.
7. Implement preparation steps wherever possible.
8. Order all materials well ahead of time.
9. Conduct the review panel meeting.
10. Establish practical and consistent script presentation format.
11. Conduct regular meetings.
12. Maintain the script tracking system.
13. Be prepared for foreseeable problems.
14. Know and use major check lists.

6. **Build FALL-BACK DAYS into the time line.** *For example:* If the time line allows for five weeks in which the writer should create ten episodes and complete the re-writes of ten earlier episodes, try adding—from the outset—a sixth week on the writer's schedule (in which there are no script requirements scheduled). Similarly, fall-back days can be added to the recording schedule to allow for such problems as the illness of an actor.

    Project personnel should be persuaded never to use the fall-back days unless it is absolutely necessary and fully approved by the program manager. In this way a bank of spare time is built up that can accommodate more serious emergencies if they arise.

7. **Implement preparation steps wherever possible.** Ensure that all of the following preparations are made well in advance of need:

    *   script cover sheets. These should be completed and given to the writer even before pilot episode writing commences.
    *   script page headers. These should be stored in the computer ready for use when scripts are entered. For writers using a typewriter, it is time saving and enhances accuracy to supply them with typing paper that has the headers already printed on them.
    *   script review cover sheets, to be appended to each script that goes out for review.
    *   identification labels. Labels for all the cans and boxes needed for reel-to-reel and cassette tapes should be prepared in advance, indicating the name of the series, the number of the program, and the agency responsible for its creation. Such advance preparation helps to make it less likely that vital material will be lost.

8. **Order needed materials ahead of time and in sufficient quantities.**

9. **Conduct the review panel meeting.** Before any script reviewing begins, a review panel meeting should be conducted so that all reviewers know exactly what their responsibilities are and exactly how to fill out the review sheets. The importance of the review panel to the success of the project should be stressed in the initial meeting, together with the essential nature of timely return of script review comments.

10. **Establish a practical script presentation format.** Writers and typists should be given clear guidelines on how the script should be presented on the printed page. This facilitates the work of the typists, the reviewers, the director, the technicians, and anyone else using the script. A sample of a recommended format for script presentation is contained in Chapter 5. (The same format is available to writers in the companion book *How to Write A Radio Serial Drama For Social Development, A Script Writer's Manual.*)

11. **Conduct regular meetings.** Everyone working on the scripts, writer, director, translator, typist, **language reviewer** (if one is used) and script reviewers, can raise questions and concerns before serious difficulties arise. This meeting also provides a venue for the sharing of suggestions and ideas that can enhance the ongoing work of the project.

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12. **Maintain the tracking system rigidly.** Once the continuous process of writing, reviewing, and recording is under way, the program manager must keep very close watch to be sure that quality is being maintained at all stages, and that the time line is being maintained. The tracking system should be adhered to rigorously from Day 1 of the writing and production cycle. The program manager might have to start out by checking the tracking system personally at the end of each day to be sure it has been completed. Once the routine has been established, an assistant can oversee the system and alert the program manager only when something goes wrong.

13. **Be prepared for foreseeable difficulties.** There are some problems that are quite likely to arise in any long-running broadcast series. It is advisable to be aware of these and to give some thought as to how they will be handled if they do arise. The most common problems that can occur in serial drama creation are:

- **Disability of a writer.** Have a back-up writer in mind. Where a writing team is being used, it is possible to call on the other writers to fill in briefly for the one who is absent. Where there is one writer working alone, the program manager should be aware of someone who can take over temporarily at short notice. This might be someone on the project staff who has writing ability and has been reviewing the scripts regularly. Alternatively, it is wise to be aware of one or two other writers who could be called upon if the primary writer has to drop out of the job permanently. Give the new writer all previously written scripts and a copy of the design document, and allow him or her two weeks to study up and submit some new scripts. This is an obvious place where fall-back time will be invaluable.

  In an emergency, it is possible to delay the story line a little while the new writer is catching up, by broadcasting an extra "Listener's Program" of questions and suggestions. Alternatively, an expert in the project topic can be called in to discuss, on the air, the value of the serial drama messages and answer commonly asked questions. Yet another idea is to have the audio director, under the guidance of the program manager, compile one or more omnibus episodes taking extracts from several previous episodes and tying them together with comments from the narrator. These omnibus episodes can be used to encourage new listeners by bringing them up-to-date with the main actions of the story so far. By using any one of these stop-gap ideas, the regular schedule can be resumed with the new writer as soon as possible.

- **Disability of an actor.** This can cause considerable disruption if episodes are being recorded very close to broadcast date. If there is a reasonable time lapse between writing, production, and broadcast, it is much easier to ask the writer to write out a particular character for a certain time, or indeed, if necessary, to remove the character from the story altogether. If the actor has the part of a character who is vital to the drama, the best approach is to write into the drama a

story line that has the character go on a trip, or become ill. In this way, you can leave the character out of the drama for several episodes, and then have a new actor take over the role at a later time. Some directors even recommend informing the audience that a new actor will be taking over at a certain date.

The problem of an actor being unable to turn up at the last minute—as recording is about to begin—causes real concern, because studio time has already been booked and other actors are waiting to work and be paid. The problem is sometimes less irksome for radio than it is for television, because not infrequently another actor is able to mimic the missing actor's voice well enough to allow the recording to continue. Alternatively, a quick review of the script might make it possible for the missing actor's lines to be divided among other characters. Such quick changes are almost impossible on television, where the last minute non-appearance of an actor usually results in expensive rescheduling.

Other problems, such as electricity shortages, strikes, and political disturbances are not so easy to prepare for in advance. The biggest asset to overcoming problems of any type is keeping all aspects of the project rigidly on the time line and maintaining some fall-back time when there are no problems occurring.

14. **Know and use major check lists.** Everyone involved with the project should be aware of the multitude of steps that must be accomplished satisfactorily—many of them on a continuing basis—if the project is to reach its goal. Some program managers like to display prominently and permanently a check list similar to the one at the beginning of this chapter to encourage staff to appreciate the value of everyone completing tasks on time and the necessity of maintaining professional standards.

Appendix A

Design Workshop Question Guide

A design workshop in progress.

The following guide provides a statement of the exact intent of each segment of the design document, together with information that should be shared with the design team as they begin discussion of the section and an explanation of what should be written in the design document. Also provided are questions that can be used to initiate discussion of each section of the design document. The suggested questions should not be seen as the only questions to use, and in some cases not all the questions given here will be necessary. In most cases, it will be necessary to ask other relevant questions as well as these. They are offered as a guide and suggestion for those who have not run a workshop of this nature previously.

1. Rationale for and statement of desired change in behavior.

Intent: To be sure that every member of the design team is perfectly clear about, and persuaded by the need for the proposed radio serial drama and the behavior changes it seeks to encourage.

Written requirement: A clear, concise statement of why the project is being undertaken. This will include a summary of research findings and an explanation of why a radio serial drama has been selected as a communication strategy.

Give to the design team before they discuss this section:
  a) The names of the sponsoring agencies.
  b) Information from the research done during the analysis phase. Include in the statement of rationale:
      • Names of researchers, and dates and places where research was carried out.
      • Names of sponsoring agencies and ministries.

Questions:

Initiating questions to clarify the rationale in the minds of design team members:

What factual knowledge do we have to help us understand whether or not our listeners perceive their current behavior as a problem?

What is the cause or what are the causes of current individual behavior and social norms in the area of the desired behavior change?

Is knowledge about the new behavior the only or major need of the audience?

Are the current individual behaviors and social norms influenced by factors such as:
  • *fear,*
  • *lack of resources,*
  • *tradition, and*
  • *other, perhaps unidentified, factors?*

What do we not know that we should find out about before we complete the statement of rationale?

2. Information about the audience or audiences.

Intent: To describe as clearly and precisely as possible the audience or
audiences selected as the main recipients of the radio serial drama. Since
radio is a universal medium, anyone can listen, but the intent of this
section is to make clear that the drama will be designed to appeal
especially to specific listeners.

Written requirement: a simple profile of each of the chosen audience(s),
together with an explanation of why the chosen audience(s) are likely to
want and respond to the suggested behavior change.

Give to the design team before this discussion:

a) A summary of the analysis of the audience data obtained during the
analysis phase.

b) Invite audience representatives to give a brief overview of what they
know from their own experience about the intended audiences with
regard to the recommended behavior change.

Questions:

What do we know as fact about the audience's feelings on this topic?

How do we know this?

*Is there any part of this topic in which we are ignorant of the audience's true
feelings? How can we increase our knowledge in this area?*

What change agents are likely to be most influential with this audience?

*(Change agents can be people, such as authority figures, sports and entertainment
stars, and influential peers, or they can be motivators like increased wealth,
higher social standing, and more leisure time.)*

*Will it be necessary to direct the message to more than one audience? If so, who
will the other audience(s) be?*

*Can all audiences be addressed through the same drama, or must we consider
other ways of meeting the needs of the other audiences?*

*What information will the writer need about the daily lives of the audience —
that was not provided in the analysis phase research?*

*(Some members of the design team—including the audience
representative(s)—can set aside some time during the design workshop to put
together a detailed audience profile that the writer can use in creating the
characters and locations for the serial drama. The writer should assist in the
creation of this profile.)*

3. Justification of the chosen medium.

Intent: To be perfectly clear about the reasons for selecting the chosen
medium (in this case, radio).

Written requirements: A clear statement of the reasons for selecting this
medium to deliver this message to this audience.

Give to the design team before the discussion: Information on the listening
habits, program preferences, and the radio ownership of the audience
from the analysis phase research.

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Questions:

Why are we using radio as the main medium, and not some other medium?
What types of radio programs does the audience enjoy? How do we know?
Does the audience usually use the radio for entertainment, or do they use radio
only for news, music, and information?
How have they responded in the past to radio dramas that contain a message?
How do we know?
Are they likely to turn off the radio if they discover that the drama contains a
message? Would the audience prefer messages to be delivered in a more
straight-forward manner? How do we know?
Are they likely to believe and trust information delivered through a fictional radio
drama? How do we know? If they are not likely to trust this information,
how can we make this format more acceptable to them?

4. The overall measurable objectives of the serial as a whole.

<u>Intent:</u> To provide a concise overview of exactly what changes in individual
behavior and societal norms the radio serial drama hopes to affect. To be
perfectly sure that these objectives are SMART. (See page 19.)

<u>Written requirement:</u> A clear, simple statement (one sentence if possible) of
the overall changes in individual behavior and societal norms that it is
hoped the audience will demonstrate as a result of listening to the serial.

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> A definition of a SMART
objective and some examples of the difference between measurable and
non-measurable objectives. (See page 19.) Explain that what is needed
here is a broad objective; specific objectives will come later in the
discussion.

Questions:

What changes in individual behavior do we want to see in the audience as a
result of this radio serial?
What changes in societal norms do we want to see as a result of this radio serial?
Where do the majority of members of our chosen audience stand on the Steps to
Behavior Change? (See page 18.)How do we know?
Which of the Steps of Behavior Change must we demonstrate in the serial in
order to guide the audience toward the desired change? What overall
knowledge do we want the audience to have as a result of this serial? What do
we want to be able to observe our audience doing as a result of this serial?
Is our stated objective SMART? (See page 19.)

5. The overall purpose of the serial as a whole.

<u>Intent:</u> To explain the approach that the radio serial drama will take in order
to be able to make it possible for the audience to want to and be able to
make the recommended behavior change. To explain whether the major

focus of the serial will be: to teach; to demonstrate; to motivate; etc., or whether the drama will need to combine a number of approaches or purposes.

Give to the design team before the discussion: An explanation of what is meant by "purpose" and a list of possible purpose statements (See below).

Written requirement: A simple, clear statement of the main approach or approaches to be taken in the radio serial drama so that it can have the best possible effect on audience behavior change.

Questions:

Overall, what approaches are we going to take in the serial drama to help the audience reach the desired objectives?

Which of the following approaches are we going to take:

- *to inform*
- *to update*
- *to motivate*
- *to encourage*
- *to reinforce*
- *to overcome*
- *to educate*
- *to suggest*
- *to advise on*
- *to demonstrate*
- *to increase awareness of*
- *some other?*

If more than one approach is needed, will these approaches be simultaneous or sequential? If there are several purposes to be approached sequentially, what will the sequence be? In other words, should the serial drama begin by, for example, educating and then move to reinforcing and then move to motivating?

6. The overall message and the main focus of the serial.

Intent: To identify the fundamental message that the serial drama must convey throughout. *For example:* "A well-planned family has the best chance of a quality life for all its members." And to determine what underlying emotion is most likely to motivate the audience in the direction of the desired behavior change.

Give the design team before the discussion: An example of an overall message. An example of what is meant by main focus—an underlying emotion, such as pride, hope, challenge (on the positive side), fear, shame, or poverty (on the negative side).

Written requirement: A clear, simple statement of the overall message that the broadcast serial drama will deliver, and a statement and explanation of the emotional focus or theme that it will express.

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Questions:

Overall Message:

What is the simplest, clearest, least confusing statement we can make about what the serial will be saying to the audience?

What is the most appropriate language in which the statement can be expressed?

Focus or Theme:

Will a positive or a negative emotion be more likely to influence our audience in the direction of the desired change?

What is the strongest overall positive feeling or emotion we want the audience to gain from listening to this serial?

Do we want them to have or feel:
- *pride*
- *love*
- *self-confidence*
- *happiness*
- *success*
- *empowerment*
- *freedom*
- *togetherness*
- *perseverance*
- *wisdom*
- *fun*
- *capable*
- *other feelings?*

Is there any need to instill any negative emotions throughout the serial drama?

If so, what should they be? (Note: Remember the importance of leaving your audience with a strong positive feeling, even if the drama brings in some negative emotions along the way.)

7. The number of episodes in the serial.

<u>Intent:</u> To determine the number of episodes the serial will contain together with a rationale for the chosen number.

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> Any information that has been obtained relevant to radio station time availability, budget restrictions, program length to which listeners are accustomed, etc.

<u>Written requirement:</u> A statement of the number of episodes decided upon, together with a statement of the reasons for the chosen number. If this has not been pre-determined by the broadcast station, or by special needs of the project, you can ask:

Questions:

Is the audience accustomed to a particular number of episodes in a radio serial drama?

How many episodes will be needed to tell a really exciting story?
How many episodes will be needed to deliver all the message information
comfortably without overloading the audience with information?
Are there any constraints on writing and recording time that could affect the
number of episodes that can be prepared?

8. The duration of each episode.

Intent: To determine the appropriate broadcast length for each episode of the
serial drama.

Give to the design team before the discussion: Any information that has been
ascertained relevant to radio station broadcast slots, budget restrictions,
etc.

Written requirement: A simple clear statement of the agreed upon duration
of each episode, together with reasons for the determined duration. If
this has not already been pre-determined by broadcast station policy, ask
the following questions.

Questions:

How many minutes (at one time) can this audience realistically devote to
listening to a drama? (Radio station personnel can help with this decision,
based on previous experience with radio dramas.)
How long can this audience listen attentively to a radio drama—even a very good
one—without being distracted?
What is the usual length of a radio drama program in this part of the world?
What does research indicate about whether this is or is not an acceptable
length?
Is this a non-technical series with the main aim of motivating the audience to
consider a change in behavior, or is it a technical knowledge series from
which the audience is expected to learn and recall a great deal of specific
information?
If it is a technical knowledge series, would it be helpful to have one or more
teaching or interactive segments in each episode as well as the drama? Does
this mean the broadcasts should be longer than a normal drama?

9. The message scope and sequence.

Intent: To determine the sub-topics that must be covered under the main
message in order to provide the audience with all necessary knowledge
and motivation. To determine if there is a particular sequence in which
the message topics must be presented and, or repeated.

Give to the design team before the discussion: Information from the research
done in the analysis phase that might be pertinent to these
determinations, such as particular knowledge gaps or strong resistance to
particular behaviors. Explain that message scope can be thought of as the
chapter headings in a text book—listing the various subjects or topics
that the book will cover. Explain that sequence means the order in which
the knowledge must be given. Explain that consideration also must be

given to whether some of the topics need more repetition than others.

<u>Written requirement:</u> A listing of all the topics to be covered, in the order in which the topics should be presented.

Questions:

Into what main topics can we divide the message information that is to be given to the audience?

Is it necessary to present these topics in a certain order? If so, what should that order be?

Are some of these topics more difficult than others for our audience to understand or to accept?

Should we repeat these topics more than the others?

How should we spread these repeats throughout the entire serial?

In what sequence should these main topics be included in the story so that listeners are led appropriately and comfortably up the steps to behavior change?

Should we keep all the episodes on one topic together in the serial drama, or should we spread them among the episodes?

10. The number of episodes to be devoted to each topic in the message scope and sequence.

<u>Intent:</u> To determine if certain aspects of the message need to be expressed more frequently than others throughout the serial.

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> Research data relevant to aspects of the topic which the audience currently seems to have the most trouble understanding or agreeing to undertake. A reminder of where the research suggests the audience is with relation to the Steps to Behavior Change. Explain to the design team the importance of distributed learning which ensures that a topic is not dropped altogether once it has been covered. Distributed learning allows for a period of concentrated exposure to a topic, followed by continued appropriate reference to that topic from then on throughout the serial drama. *For example:* There might be four sequential episodes (14 - 17) concentrating on the importance of vitamin A. From then on to the end of the serial (episode 52) the value of vitamin A will be discussed again more casually several times.

<u>Written requirement:</u> A final numerical listing of all episodes showing the topics and indicating the number of episodes being devoted to each topic (See Appendix C sample, page 140).

Questions:

Looking at where our audience stands on the Steps to Behavior Change, should we be putting more emphasis on certain aspects of this subject than on others? Which aspects should have more episodes devoted to them?

How much of the information in each of the topics is new to this audience and may need to be repeated?

*Should the repetition be spread throughout the series, or should it be concentrated
    in the block of episodes devoted to a particular topic?*
*Should some broadcast slots be set aside for review and for listener questions and
    comments (rather than for ongoing episodes)?*
If so, how many and at what intervals?
*Will related topics be delivered one after the other, or will they be separated and
    spread throughout the serial?*

11. The measurable objectives of each episode or group of episodes.

<u>Intent:</u> To be perfectly clear about the knowledge or behavior change or
    attitudinal change that the audience will be expected to have as a result
    of listening to a particular episode or group of episodes.

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> A reminder of what is meant
    by measurable objectives. A reminder that no one episode can be
    expected to result in enormous changes of attitude and behavior and
    knowledge, but that each episode (in the case of technical-knowledge
    dramas) and each group of episodes (in the case of non-technical serials)
    should be written to a specific measurable objective.

<u>Written requirement:</u> A simple statement to fill in the following grid for each
    episode or group of episodes (it is not necessary to have all three
    objectives in each episode):

Questions:

> After this episode, the audience will
>
> KNOW:
>
> DO:
>
> HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF:

*Is each objective stated in a way that leaves no doubt in the writer's mind what
    changes the episode or group of episodes is to try to achieve in the audience?*
*Is the stated objective sufficiently differentiated from the objectives of other
    programs or group of programs?*
Does the stated objective fit in with the overall objectives for the series?
Is the stated objective SMART? (See page 19.)

12. The purpose of each individual episode or group of episodes.

<u>Intent:</u> To clarify (especially for the writer) the approach the episode should
    take. *For example*, an episode that has as its purpose to educate needs to
    present information in a systematic and repeated manner and provide
    more opportunity for audience interaction, than does an episode

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designed to motivate an audience

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> A reminder of the need for stating the purpose of the episode or group of episodes. A reminder about possible episode purposes (see section 5 above).

<u>Written requirement:</u> A simple statement for each episode or group of episodes that completes the following sentence:

The purpose of this episode is to....

(See sample in Appendix page 141.)

Questions:

What is the real purpose of each episode or group of episodes? Is it to educate, to demonstrate, to motivate, etc.? (Use the list that the team worked out for section 5 of this guide.)

Does this purpose fit in with the overall purposes of the project? Is it necessary to have more than one purpose for this episode or group of episodes?

13. The precise message content for each episode or group of episodes.

<u>Intent:</u> To provide (particularly for the writer) a clear, precise statement of the message content that should be included in the episode or group of episodes.

<u>Give to the design team before they begin group work:</u> A reminder that it is not the writer's job to determine the message. A reminder that every message given in an Enter-Educate serial drama must be: complete, correct, clear, concise, consistent. Share with the design team some samples of well-written content (see appendix, page 142). Provide each working group with "content pages" (see page 45) on which they can record their determinations about the objective, purpose, and content of each episode or group of episodes. Remind design team members to mark all words that should be included in the glossary.

<u>Written requirement:</u> A clear, detailed statement of the precise message information that must be included in each episode or group of episodes, together with a statement of how any technical words or terms are to be listed in the glossary and used consistently by the writer.

Questions:

What information must be included in this episode or group of episodes so that the audience has the very best chance of achieving the objectives of the episode and of the series as a whole?

How must we express the content so that it makes complete sense to everyone in the audience—even those with no previous knowledge of the topic?

Which technical words or phrases need to be re-expressed in language that the audience can accept and understand easily?

Can we simplify the content even further? Is there enough content? Too much content?

Is this message complete, correct, clear, concise, and consistent as it is stated for this episode? Is it consistent with what has been given for other episodes?

14. Glossary and acronym list.

<u>Intent:</u> To determine all words and phrases that need to be given a simple and consistent explanation every time they are used and to state what those explanations or definitions should be. To provide the writer with the full and correct names of any organizations, methods, etc. that are usually expressed as acronyms.

<u>Give to the design team before they begin small-group work:</u> A place where they can list all words that should be included in the glossary. This should be a flip chart or board where all members of the design team can see what is being added to the glossary, or where they can add their own contributions. Remind the team of the importance of giving simple explanations and definitions of technical words, and of the importance of using consistent words and phrases when explaining important aspects of the message.

<u>Written requirement:</u> a glossary presented in alphabetical order. Also be sure that design team members mark with an asterisk (*) all words or phrases in their content pages that have definitions in the glossary.

Questions:

Glossary:

What is the simplest, clearest explanation we can give of this word or this term that will be understood easily by our audience?

If the design team is working in a language different from that to be used in the scripts, will it be necessary to include a local language translation so the writer will know exactly what words to use?

Acronyms:

Are there acronyms used in the content of the episodes that need to be spelled out (and translated) for the writer's use?

15. Script review panel and script support team.

<u>Intent:</u> To determine which members of the design team should undertake the regular task of reviewing every script of the serial drama as it comes from the writer, together with reviewing the finished design document and support materials. Also, to determine those who are willing to be available for script support. (Information on the precise needs of the script review panel and the script support team are given in Chapter 2.)

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> A reminder of the importance

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of reviewing every script to ensure that the message adheres to the design document and that the story is well written, suited to the audience, and likely to attract and hold the attention of the audience. Also, a reminder of the need for the script writer to have supporters to whom to turn when questions about content arise.

Written requirement: A listing of those who will be on the script review panel and those who will be on the script support team.

Questions:

Review Panel

What types of expertise should be represented on the review panel: content specialist, audio director, language specialist, etc.? (See page 29 for possible list.)

How much time will these people need to review each script? How much time can the project allow? Which members of the design team have this time available?

Should each reviewer check the entire script, or should the script be marked up, showing individual reviewers the parts on which they should concentrate?

Will it be necessary to reimburse panel members for review work?

Support Team

Which members of the design team can be available to the writer as a support team?

To fulfill the requirements of the script support team, will it be necessary to recruit people outside the design team? If so, who should these people be?

Will it be necessary to reimburse script support team members for this work?

16. Support materials.

Intent: To determine what, if any, support materials will be needed to accompany the radio serial drama, bearing in mind that any communication project has an increased chance of success if more than one medium is used.

Give to the design team before the discussion: An overview (and copies where applicable) of any existing support materials that should be considered for use with the radio episodes. Explain any budgetary limitations that might exist with regard to existing or new support materials. Share with the team the guidelines for support materials (see chapter 5).

Written requirement: A statement of exactly which existing support materials will be used, or what new materials will be developed, together with a brief rationale of why these materials are needed.

Questions:

Is there an essential need for support materials with this serial drama? If so, for whom are they essential and what should they be?

If support materials are not essential, should some be considered anyway as a

means of enhancing the attraction and usefulness of the serial?
Are there existing materials that can be used? Is the content of these materials
   consistent with the messages to be included in the radio serial drama?
How much time will be needed to develop and test new support materials?
How and where will listeners be able to obtain the support materials?

17. Promotion plans.

<u>Intent:</u> To determine what promotional activities and materials will be
   needed and developed to bring the radio serial drama and its messages to
   the attention of the audience.

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> Remind the team of the need
   for promotion of the communication project, and share with them
   guidelines for promotional activities (see chapter 5). Invite the team to
   consider creation of a logo and a slogan.

<u>Written requirement:</u> Statement of promotional activities and materials to be
   developed, together with any agreed upon slogan and logo.

Questions:

Which media—to which the audience has regular access—could be used for
   promotional spots or pieces:
   * *radio?*
   * *schools?*
   * *newspaper?*
   * *clinic posters?*
   * *other?*
Are there any popular figures: sports stars, movie stars, etc. who could be used
   beneficially in promotion?
When should promotion begin? How often should promotional pieces be used
   before broadcast commences and during regular episode broadcasting?
Should there be a special logo or slogan (or both) which people could associate
   immediately with the serial and its message?
Will the promotional materials be developed in house or will an advertising
   agency be employed to prepare the promotional campaign? Is there a budget
   for this?

18. Monitoring and evaluation plan.

<u>Intent:</u> To devise an effective system of monitoring the outcomes of the radio
   serial drama while it is being broadcast, and to carry out summative
   evaluation when the broadcasts are complete.

<u>Give the design team before the discussion:</u> Invite an evaluator to explain to
   the design team the importance of pilot testing, monitoring, and
   evaluation. The final details of this plan most likely will be put together
   by the evaluation specialists who will be hired to carry out the evaluation.
   Design team members, however, can be asked for ideas about where,
   when, and how pilot testing, monitoring, and evaluation can be carried
   out.

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<u>Written requirement:</u> A statement of exactly how, when, and where monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken.

Questions:

How many pilot episodes should be tested?

How often should audience response to the serial drama be monitored once it is being broadcast regularly?

Where, and in what way, might audience feed-back best be compiled?

How will the writer make use of feed-back about earlier episodes once writing is under way?

Where, and in what way, might final summative evaluation be undertaken? What should be done with the summative evaluation results so that future projects can benefit from them?

19. Time line.

<u>Intent:</u> To create a detailed chart showing the dates by which each step in the writing, typing, translating, reviewing, revising, pilot-testing, recording, editing, and broadcasting of each episode and all support and promotional materials must be completed.

<u>Give to the design team before the discussion:</u> Explain the vital importance of establishing and maintaining a time line. Provide a template of the activities that need to be included in the time line (See pages 30 and 59). Note that the time line cannot be finished during the design workshop, but design team members need the opportunity to give their input to it and to appreciate its importance.

<u>Written requirement:</u> A full, detailed time line for all activities.

Questions:

Will the writer(s) be working full or part-time on this project?

What is the realistic number of scripts the writer(s) can complete each week, bearing in mind that it will be necessary sometimes to work on revision of earlier scripts at the same time as writing new ones?

How does the production house or radio station prefer to work: recording one episode a week on a regular basis, or recording blocks of episodes at one time?

How long after the completion of the design workshop can the design document (or at least the writer's brief) be ready for the writer's use? How long after receiving the design document or writer's brief (in draft form) can the writer deliver the finished story treatment and character profiles?

How long after approval of treatment and profiles can the writer deliver the pilot episodes?

How long will it be between the completion of the pilot scripts and the carrying out of the pilot tests? How long after the tests before the results are compiled so the writer can commence ongoing script writing?

20. Story treatment and sample episode.

This part of the design document will be prepared by the writers. They will provide a narrative outline or synopsis of the plots for the entertainment side of the drama, indicating how the message will be included naturally, subtly, and gradually.

The story treatment and sample episode will be added to the design document after the design workshop. In assisting the writer(s) to develop the plots and characters for the drama, the design team can be guided by information in the companion volume to this book: *How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Manual.*

Questions:

What type of story do members of our chosen audience prefer: adventure, romance, comedy, tradition, etc.?

What type of characters do members of our chosen audience prefer? What should these characters do for a living? Where should they live? How old should they be? What names should they have? What type of personalities should they have? What language should they use: formal or colloquial?

What type of emotional involvement is most likely to appeal to members of our chosen audience: negative or positive emotions? Fear, jealousy, love, pride, compassion, success, etc.?

The full script of a sample episode, showing the quality of the drama, and giving an understanding of how story and message will be blended will be written for the design document when the writer has been selected and the treatment and character profiles have been approved.

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Appendix B

Pilot Testing Questions
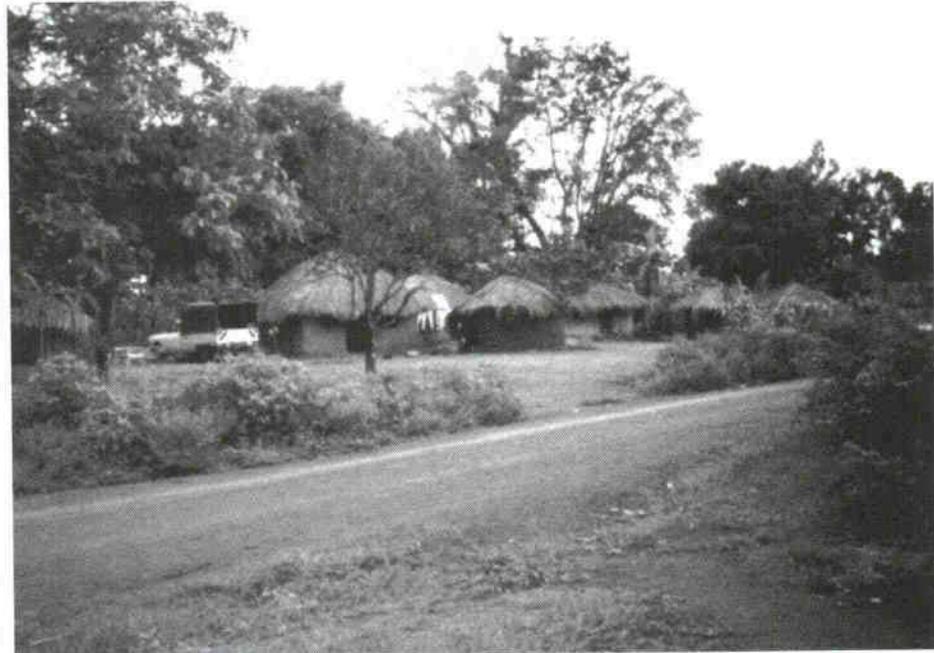
Radio can bring social development messages to remote areas.

Questions That Can Be Asked During Pilot-Testing

To compile detailed information on vital aspects of the radio serial drama, pilot-testing sessions can include some or all of the following questions—whether they are used in focus group discussions or written questionnaires.

1. Does the audience accept the programs?

Do you think this program is about people who live in a community like yours, or is it about total strangers?

Do you think it is more suitable for men or women?

What age people do you think would enjoy this serial? People of your age or people of a different age?

Do any of the characters in the story remind you of anyone you know? Who?

Did any of the characters in the story say or do anything that you think would offend or upset any of your friends and relatives?

2. Does the audience understand the story and the message?

What are the names of some of the characters and what are they like?

What is happening in the story so far?

What do you think is likely to happen next in the story?

What do you think might happen eventually?

Talk about any part of story that seemed foolish or unbelievable to you or anything that you did not understand.

In one episode of this story, the people of the community will be faced with an AIDS epidemic. How do you think each of the following two characters will react to that news? (name two characters)

What words or phrases used by any of the characters did you not understand?

Were you uncomfortable with the language used by any of the characters? If so, what?

Was there any information in the drama that might be useful for you or your friends? What was it?

What main points of the information do you recall? (This question will help determine if the pacing of the teaching is correct).

Was the amount of information given too little, too much or just right?

3. Does the audience trust the programs?

Who were the people in the story that you felt you could trust if you knew them personally?

Who were the people you would not trust?

Was there anything discussed in the story that you do not believe? If so, what was it?

Do you think that characters in a story can be relied upon to give good advice? Why or why not?

Do you trust the source of information in the story?
Is there someone else you would rather turn to for advice? Who?

4. Is the audience attracted to the story?

Which of the following words would you use to describe this story?
- *boring*
- *emotional*
- *exciting*
- *interesting*
- *funny*
- *suspenseful*
- *ordinary*
- *gripping*
- *realistic*
- *offensive*

Tell me about any of the characters that particularly attracted your attention.
*   Tell me why this person attracted your attention.*
If you had the choice of listening once a week at the same time to this
*   program, a music program, or a magazine program, which would you*
*   choose? Why?*
Do you believe that this story could happen in real life? Why or why not?

5. Does the audience appreciate the programs?

Do you think people would be likely to listen to this program on a regular
*   basis? Why? or Why not?*
Tell me why you think this drama is or is not an interesting way to learn
*   some valuable lessons in life.*
Do you prefer to learn important matters through a drama like this or by
*   listening to an expert give a talk?*
Why would you recommend or not recommend the drama to your friends
*   and family?*

Appendix
B

Appendix C

Sample Design Document Pages

Health workers meet to hear the distance learning programs.

The following pages are extracts from a design document for a non-technical knowledge radio serial drama entitled *A New Dawn*, created in Nigeria. These samples contain the introductory pages to the design document and samples of the message content for several episodes of the serial drama. Samples of the glossary are also included.

Other important information included in the original design document (but not included with this sample) are:

- the time line
- the budget
- the support materials and promotional materials descriptions
- the story synopsis
- the sample episode.

DESIGN DOCUMENT

For a 26 Episode Radio Serial Drama

Prepared by the

Design Team of the South-West Cluster

Lagos, Nigeria

At the

Radio Drama Script Writers and Design

Documents Workshop

Held at

Jam'iyyar Matan Arewa (JMA)

No. 4, Bawo Road, Hausawa Quarters, Kano

Kano State

Radio Serial Drama Project South-West Cluster, Lagos, Nigeria

Preamble

This 15-minute, 26-episode radio (*A New Dawn*) serial drama is designed to improve the standard of living and the quality of life of members of the community in the South-West Lagos Cluster of Nigeria.

The medium chosen is radio, because research has shown that it has the greatest reach. We intend to use the Enter-Educate approach to engage the attention and interest of our audience so as to pass messages to them in a natural and subtle way. The radio serial drama, however, is being backed by other strategies and support materials in order to compensate for the limitations of radio and to reinforce the radio messages.

The basics of the design document for this serial were worked on by the South-West Lagos Cluster design team during a ten-day Radio Drama Script Writers and Design Documents Workshop conducted by Esta de Fossard, Senior Communication Advisor from Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, USA. The workshop was held at Jam'iyyar Matan Arewa (JMA) in Kano from June 8-19, 1998.

The information in this document is the blue print and reliable reference for the design of the radio serial drama, and is to be used by the writers in creating the episodes of the drama that will appropriately and adequately meet the entertainment and educational needs of the intended audience.

Design Team Members:

1. Mr. David Atamewalen — Content Specialist, HIV/AIDS
2. Mrs. Augusta Iyabo Ojewale — Content Specialist, MCH
3. Miss Abimbola Akinyemi — Content Specialist, Democracy & Governance
4. Mr. Joseph Olu Ogunrotimi — Content Specialist, FP
5. Mr. Femi Jarrett — Representative, Production Outfit
6. Mr. Tunde Aiyegbusi — Script Writer
7. Mrs. Abiola Olatunde — Consultant Script Writer, Staywell Foundation RTC, Ibadan
8. Mr. Kolawole Ojo — Audience Representative, South-West Lagos Cluster
9. Mrs. Abiola Ajibola — Documentalist, Staywell Foundation RTC, Ibadan
10. Mrs. Babafunke Fagbemi — Program Officer, Training, Staywell Foundation RTC, Ibadan
11. Dr. 'Wumi Ogunsola — Field Office Manager, JHU/PCS-Ibadan Executive Producer-JHU/PCS

Rationale:

We are making this serial to show the people of South-West Lagos cluster of Nigeria how they can increase their chances of improved quality of life for family members. (See preamble).

Audience:

Our audience will be based mostly in an urban setting and will include youth, married couples, and educated women, (the family).

Justification of Medium:

Radio is cheap and affordable with very wide coverage.

Overall Series Measurable Objectives:

MCH: There will be an increase in the number of fathers who ensure their children are fully immunized.

FP: There will be an increase in the number of married couples who use modern family planning contraceptive methods.

STDs/HIV/AIDS: There will be no increase in the reported cases of STDs.

D & G: There will be identifiable increased recognition and respect for the females' right to personal dignity and freedom of association, and there will be increased support for women's political empowerment.

Overall Series Purpose:

To educate and demonstrate to the intended audience how they can improve the quality of their lives, and to persuade them to adopt behavior and practices that will lead to improvement of their lives.

Overall Series Message:

The overall message is that people can increase their chances of improved quality of life if they plan their families, protect themselves from STDs/HIV/AIDS, ensure that their children receive full immunization, and that women enjoy respect and rights to human dignity and association.

Focus:

The main emotional focus of the serial will be on love and hope.

Number of Episodes:

The radio drama serial will have 26 episodes.

Duration:

The duration of each drama episode will be 15 minutes.

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Message Scope:

The message scope will cover FP, HIV/AIDS, D & G, and MCH.

Message Topic Sequence:

Episode 1:
Introduction to story and main characters.

Episode 2:
Introduction (continued).

Episode 3:
HIV/AIDS (1) Definition of terms: STDs/HIV/AIDS.

Episode 4:
HIV/AIDS (2) Causes and modes of spread of STDs/HIV/AIDS.

Episode 5:
HIV/AIDS (3) Signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS.

Episode 6:
HIV/AIDS (4) Prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Episode 7:
HIV/AIDS (5) Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS (continued).

Episode 8:
MCH (1) Immunizable diseases and their schedules.

Episode 9:
MCH (2) Reinforcing the importance of immunization and the consequences of not fully immunizing your child.

Episode 10:
D & G (1) Democracy in the family.

Episode 11:
FP (1) Reinforcing the definition of family planning, who needs it and when to start using family planning.

Episode 12:
D & G (2) Women's rights as human rights.

Episode 13:
MCH (3) The role a father can play in fully immunizing his child.

Episode 14:
MCH (4) The role a father can play in fully immunizing his child (continued).

Episode 15:
FP (2) Types of modern contraceptives.

Episode 16:
FP (3) Types of modern contraceptives (continued).

Episode 17:
   FP (4) Benefits of using modern contraceptives.

Episode 18:
   FP (5) Myths, rumors, and misconceptions of modern contraceptives and their eradication. (continued).

Episode 19:
   FP (6) Myths, rumors, and misconceptions of modern contraceptives and their eradication. (continued).

Episode 20:
   D & G (3) Women's rights as human rights (continued).

Episode 21:
   MCH (5) A father can ensure that his child receives full immunization.

Episode 22:
   MCH (6) Father as child immunization ADVOCATE.

Episode 23:
   HIV/AIDS (6) Consequences of HIV/AIDS.

Episode 24:
   HIV/AIDS (7) Consequences and implications of HIV/AIDS.

Episode 25:
   HIV/AIDS (8) Support for people living with AIDS (PLWA).

Episode 26:
   D & G (4) Women's Political Empowerment and the enhancement of community life.

Episode X:
   NID Campaign
   (This episode will be incorporated into the series as near as possible to the date of the National Immunization Day Campaign).

Message Content of All Episodes

These are samples of the detailed message content that the design document gave for each episode. The asterisks indicate words or acronyms that are defined in the glossary/acronym list later in the document.

Episodes 1 & 2: Introduction
Purpose: The purpose of these episodes is to introduce the serial story and characters to the audience.

Objectives: After these episodes, the audience will:

Know: Some of the principal characters in the serial drama.

Do: Be attracted to and make a conscious effort to tune in to the serial.

Attitude: Feel interested in the drama enough to follow the series.

Content: Entertainment. Introduction of the characters and setting of the mood of the serial.

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Episode 3:   <u>Definition of terms: STDs*/HIV*/AIDS*</u>

Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to educate the audience about the definition of STDs.

Objectives: After this episode, the audience will:

    Know: How to correctly define STDs and HIV/AIDS.

    Do: Share this knowledge with their peers.

    Attitude: Feel confident and proud that they understand and can define STDs accurately.

    Content: Infections come from many sources, such as water, insect bites, dirty environment, and from sex. Sex is a natural and important part of life. However, sometimes, it is possible to contract some infections through having sex with an already infected person. These are called sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). One infection that can be transmitted through sexual contact is HIV. It is one of the deadliest infections and has no cure. HIV is the name of a virus (small germ) that causes the condition known as AIDS. Someone who has already been infected with this virus is said to be HIV positive. HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. AIDS* stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

Episode 4:   <u>Causes and modes of transmission of STDs/HIV/AIDS.</u>

Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to educate the audience about the causes and modes of the spread of STDs/HIV/AIDS.

Objectives: After this episode, the audience will:

    Know: The different causes of STDs/HIV/AIDS and their modes of transmission.

    Do: Explain the causes and modes of transmission of STDs/HIV/AIDS to their peers. Avoid personal behavior that will expose them to contracting STDs/HIV/AIDS.

    Attitude: Feel confident and self-reassured that they know how to protect themselves from STDs/HIV/AIDS, and that they can help their peers understand self-protection.

    Content: STDs: are caused and spread by having sexual intercourse with an already infected person. A very common example is gonorrhea.

HIV/AIDS: Is transmitted by having sexual intercourse with an already infected partner. HIV/AIDS is not only transmitted through sexual intercourse.

HIV/AIDS is transmitted through coming in contact with infected body fluids. These body fluids are blood, vaginal secretions, semen, and breast milk.

HIV/AIDS can be transmitted also through the following:

a) Transfusion of unscreened and infected blood.

b) An infected pregnant mother to her unborn child.

c) Sharing unsterilized sharp instruments such as razor blades, needles and syringes, shaving sticks, and knives.

Episode 5:   <u>Signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS</u>
Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to educate the audience and reinforce their knowledge about the signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS.
Objectives: After this episode, the audience will:
  Know: The major signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS.
  Do: Go for medical help if concerned about their health. Get more information from trained peer counselors and health workers.
  Attitude: Feel motivated and comfortable about taking action to keep themselves healthy and discussing these signs and symptoms.
  Content: Signs and Symptoms:
                  prolonged diarrhea
                  white coating on the tongue
                  enlargement of glands in the neck, arm pit, groin
                  persistent fever
                  persistent cough
                  skin infections
                  unexplained weight loss
            These signs and symptoms are however, not conclusive evidence of HIV/AIDS. They occur in many other diseases too! If you have any of these conditions, go to the doctor for a professional diagnosis. Your doctor will tell you what to do! People who have been confirmed to have AIDS also manifest some or all of these signs and symptoms which occur simultaneously. It is possible for you to look healthy and yet be HIV positive. The only way to be sure if you are infected with the HIV virus is to have it medically diagnosed.

**Episodes
6 & 7:**   <u>Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS</u>
Purpose: The purpose of these episodes is to educate the audience about the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.
Objectives: After these episodes, the audience will:
  Know: The various methods of prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.
  Do: Take appropriate measures to protect themselves. Seek medical attention.
  Attitude: Feel confident that they can protect themselves. Feel courageous enough to accept the reality of the situation.
  Content: The obvious safest way to avoid HIV/AIDS is abstinence* from sex. When you are ready to be sexually active you should protect yourself by using a condom correctly with every sexual encounter.

            Avoid sharing sharp objects, razor blades, needles and syringes, shaving sticks, and knives. Insist on only screened blood in the event of a blood transfusion. Avoid contact with the body fluids of infected persons. Always ensure that a new needle and syringe whose seal has not been broken is used each time you are injected.

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You cannot contract HIV/AIDS by casual contact with an already infected person. Such safe contacts include hugging, dancing, sitting next to someone, eating together or sharing utensils, bathing or swimming, sneezing, and insect bites. If you or any member of your family has HIV/AIDS, you can still live a normal healthy life together as a family. You can still show that you love and care.

Control: If you already have AIDS, do not lose hope. Maintain a balanced diet. Seek prompt medical attention from hospitals whenever you feel unwell or notice any signs of illness. Maintain a high level of cleanliness and hygiene. Use a condom always if you must have sex.

Episodes 18 & 19: Myths, rumors, and misconceptions of modern contraceptive methods and their eradication.

Purpose: The purpose of these episodes is to help eradicate myths, rumors, and misconceptions of modern contraceptive methods.

Objectives: After this episode, the audience will:

Know: The facts about modern contraceptive methods.

Do: Tell others the facts about modern contraceptive methods.

Attitude: Feel confident and reassured about the safety of modern contraceptive methods.

Content: There are several myths, rumors, and misconceptions about modern contraceptive methods. All these myths, rumors, and misconceptions are untrue:

It is believed that developed countries have a hidden agenda to reduce the population of our country and therefore encourage contraceptive use.

Contraception* encourages promiscuity* within the populace.

The condom* is fragile and is liable to breakage.

The foaming tablets remain within the body and cause cancer.

The IUD* migrates to the brain and causes insanity.

Vasectomy* is a means of castrating men so that they cannot enjoy sex.

Those who go for permanent methods of contraceptives may be infertile after reincarnation.

These rumors are untrue. The truth is contraceptive methods are even more widely used in developed countries, and thus are not designed for wiping out the country's population. Scientific research studies show that the use of modern contraceptive methods does not necessarily encourage promiscuity*.

Condoms* are made of strong material and if used correctly, will not tear. Always read the package carefully to know how to use the condom.

After foaming tablets dissolve they do not accumulate in the vagina* but are passed out along with vaginal secretions. They do not lead to cancer.

The IUD* cannot move about within the body, so it does not migrate to the brain, and cannot cause insanity. It is placed within the uterus and therefore cannot get to the brain.

Vasectomy only ensures that sperm is not released along with the ejaculate and does not in any way inhibit sexual enjoyment.

Scientifically, it is not proven that vasectomy affects infertility after reincarnation.

Episode 20: <u>Democracy* and Governance: Women's rights as human rights</u>

Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to reinforce in the audience the need to recognize women's rights as human rights.

Objectives: After this episode, the audience will:

  Know: How the right to freedom of association applies to females both in and outside the home.

  Do: All family members will respect and encourage the female members' right to association outside the family.

  Attitude: Feel comfortable that female members can enjoy the right to associate.

  Content: The right to the freedom of association is basic to any human being for a fulfilled life, females inclusive.

  However, in most Nigerian homes the females in the past have often been denied the exercise of this right. Modern attitudes require that the male members of the family give due recognition, respect, and support to the female members in this regard.

Episode 21: <u>Child receiving immunization* with father's support</u>

Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to demonstrate that the wise father will ensure that his child is fully immunized.

Objectives: After this episode, the audience will:

  Know: The wise father can and should ensure that his child is fully immunized.

  Do: Fathers will take the children for immunization or motivate their wives to let their children receive full immunization.

  Attitude: Feel committed and confident that the child will have a healthy future.

  Content: One of the ways you can guarantee that the child leads a healthy life and can achieve his future dreams is for the child to be fully immunized. The loving, wise father takes his child to the clinic to make sure all immunizations are completed. The loving, wise father feels proud of his involvement in caring for the health of his child.

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Episode 22: **Father as a child immunization advocate***

Purpose: The purpose of this episode is to demonstrate that fathers can be advocates for ensuring full immunization of their children.

Objectives: After this episode the audience will:

Know: That wise, loving fathers who ensure that their children are fully immunized can become advocates to other fathers.

Do: Persuade other fathers to follow their example and ensure that their children are fully immunized.

Attitude: Feel confident and proud about their role in full immunization.

Content: The loving, wise father ensures that his child is fully immunized in order to increase the child's chances of realizing dreams. The loving, wise father also gives the necessary support and encouragement to his wife with regard to care of the children. Moreover, he enjoins all fathers to follow his example in supporting their wives in fully immunizing their children. By doing this, they will increase their chances of realizing their dreams.

GLOSSARY

(These are samples of some of the glossary and acronym definitions that were contained in the design document to assist the writer with knowing how to define special words, terms, and acronyms. The words in parentheses indicate how the terms should be translated into the local language.)

ABSTINENCE	Total avoidance of sexual activity
ADVOCATE	One who supports, speaks in favor, or recommends to others a particular attitude, action, or practice.
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome which is a disease that has no known cure.
BCG	The vaccine (Ajesara) drug used as immunization against tuberculosis (Iko ife).
DEMOCRACY	A participatory system of government. This means all citizens of a country have a right to contribute to the decision making processes of the country.
DPT	The vaccine used as immunization against whooping cough, pertussis, and tetanus.
D	(Iko gbofun gbofun),
P	(Iko awubi),
T	(Arun ipa).
FAMILY PLANNING	Is a way of life adopted willingly by a couple in order to have children by choice and not by chance.
FHR	Fundamental Human Rights are natural rights prescribed by the Nigerian Constitution.
IMMUNIZATION	Administration of vaccines to protect children from the six killer diseases.
IUD	Intrauterine Device used by women to prevent pregnancy.
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus is a small germ that causes the condition known as AIDS (see above).
HIV POSITIVE	A person who has been screened and confirmed to be carrying Human Immunodeficiency Virus.
MEASLES	(Eyi) A viral infection that can be avoided through immunization.
PLWA	People Living With AIDS, a term applied to those people who already have it.
POLIOMYELITIS	(Romolapa romolese) a paralysis of the limbs that can be avoided with immunization.
SCREENING	Testing blood samples for detecting HIV.
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections which are caused by having sexual intercourse with someone who is already infected.
TRANSFUSION	Infusion of blood into the body, usually as part of treatment of disease.
VASECTOMY	Interruption of the passage of sperm. It is a contraceptive method that prevents sperm from being released along with the ejaculate.
WPE	Women's Political Empowerment: This means enabling females to freely join political associations and seek leadership positions.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BCG	Bacillus Calmet Guerin (Iko Ife)
BTL	Bilateral Tubal Ligation
DPT	Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus
FP	Family Planning
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IUD	Intrauterine Device
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
NIDs	National Immunization Days
PLWA	People Living With AIDS
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
WPE	Women's Political Empowerment

Glossary

Actor. Person who acts as, or pretends to be, another person in a dramatic performance.

Analysis phase. Phase where it is decided if a communication intervention is necessary and feasible for behavior change.

Assistant director. Person who assists the media director in production of serial drama.

Audience. Group or groups of people for whom the serial drama message is designed.

Audio production house. Place where serial episodes are recorded.

Broadcast outlet representative. Someone knowledgeable of station policy who can speak for station management.

Content advisor. Design team member knowledgeable about message content details.

Contract. Written agreement between the program manager and writers and actors telling what is expected from each party.

Country representative. Person in position of authority with funding agency able to make decisions on policies and resources.

Cover sheet. Front page of each script with information on objectives, actors, music, and sound effects.

Character profile. Detailed descriptions of main characters in the serial drama plot.

Design approach. Uses three elements: the design team, the design workshop, and the design document, for successful Enter-Educate serial drama.

Design document. Blueprint and dependable written reference of all aspects of the serial drama.

Design team. Group of advisors who work together to construct the design document.

Design workshop. Period of time in which the design team meets to complete the design document.

Edit-free production. Editing that takes place during recording, producing high quality programs with less time and cost by reducing post-recording editing.

Enter-Educate. From the words entertainment and education, communication giving a pro-social educational message in an entertaining format.

Fall-back days. Extra days added into the time line to allow for problems.

Funding agency representative. Member of design team in position of authority with the funding agency.

Interactive radio instruction. Radio programming in which listeners give immediate oral response to questions.

Media director. Person in charge of directing and recording the serial drama.

Message. Knowledge that the serial drama conveys to enable positive behavior change in the audience.

Ministry representatives. Authoritative representatives of involved ministries, for example, the Ministry of Health.

Non-Technical Enter-Educate serial drama. Drama that emphasizes general audience motivation rather than technical knowledge.

Pilot testing. Episodes presented to the audience to test for appreciation and comprehension.

P-Process. JHU/CCP's development process on an IEC program.

Project director. Person who oversees IEC project as a whole.

Project overview. Brief outline of funding agency, analysis phase, audience, design document.

Program manager. Person in charge of design and production.

Promotional materials. Materials used to attract an audience and arouse interest in a program.

Resource representative. Person knowledgeable about, and perhaps able to supply, resources needed to support a serial drama.

Script. Text used in the radio serial drama.

Script writer(s). Person or persons responsible for writing script for serial drama.

Script writing. The process of putting the story contents into acceptable language and format.

Serial drama. Dramatized story that continues over time.

Seven C's of effective communication. Basic principals of effective communication.

Signatory page. Page in the design document signed by all those having authority over the project.

Steps to behavior change. Indicator of where audience stands with regard to behavior change.

Standard opening and closing announcement. Identical announcements used to make acknowledgments to, and provide audience information about ministries, supporters, and funding agencies, played at the beginning and end of each episode.

Team writing. Two or more writers working together on the serial drama.

Technical knowledge Enter-Educate serial drama. Drama usually used for distance education to increase knowledge in a specific area.

Time line. Dates by which each activity of drama creation and production must be completed.

Trained technicians. Fully trained and experienced technical assistants in operating room and at control board at the production house.

Treatment (or synopsis). Narrative outline of the story in the serial drama.

Writer's brief. Partial design document needed by writer before script writing begins.

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How To

Write a
Radio Serial Drama
for Social Development

A Script Writer's Manual

by Esta de Fossard

Using This Book

This book is a practical manual for script writers preparing radio serial dramas for development projects. It will be useful both for novices and experienced script writers who have not yet written drama that educates as well as entertains.

So that this book can be used as a course manual, whether in a formal class or for independent study, each chapter begins with a study guide listing learning objectives and expected outcomes and a suggested exercise.

How to Write a Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Script Writer's Manual was originally designed to assist script writers working in projects supported by Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services. For this reason, many of the samples and examples it contains relate to family planning and reproductive health; however, the script writing principles discussed and demonstrated here apply just as well to other development topics.

The manual largely concentrates on the practical aspects of script writing, although a prologue summarizes relevant communication theory. For those writers who would like to learn more about theory, a bibliography/references at the end lists key books.

Esta de Fossard
1996

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Developing the Setting

Prologue

Radio Serial Drama: The Theory Behind The Practice

by John Douglas Storey
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All drama is a form of **communication**. Radio serial drama created for development purposes, because it is received entirely through the ears of listeners, is a form of **oral communication**. Those who design and write radio social dramas, therefore, can benefit from an understanding of the theories that clarify oral communication. More than two thousand years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle proposed some principles of persuasive oral communication that hold as true for today's radio scripts as they did for the orators whom Aristotle addressed. Among the principles Aristotle outlined in his book *Rhetoric* are that speakers should: be credible (believable), excite the emotions of the audience, and provide proof to support their arguments.

Aristotle's principles were an early form of communication theory, that is, an explanation of how people use and are affected by communication. Modern communication theorists have expanded on the ideas of Aristotle and others in response to the growth of mass media over the past 100 years. Although communication theories help explain how communication leads to changes in thinking and behavior, they can never predict exactly how people will react to a message. Still, an understanding of these theories that come from extensive and systematic research conducted in virtually every part of the world can help the designers and writers of radio drama to fashion programs with the potential to bring about positive social change. The theories can provide an understanding of how people are most likely to respond to a communication such as a radio drama under given conditions.

During the design process, the design team of writers, program managers, researchers, and other professionals can use theoretical explanations to guide program development (Chapter 1 discusses the role of the design team). Theory, for example, may help determine what type of communication is needed to encourage the audience to make specific behavioral changes. Theory may also suggest motivations for a character's behavior or anticipate how listeners will respond to a plot twist. In this way, scripts draw insight from tried and true explanations of communication and behavior change, while ensuring that those insights become an integral part of a compelling story.

Levels of Communication

Communication connects people, groups, communities, and societies. It can be seen in virtually every aspect of human society and occurs on many levels. A drama designed to promote social change generally has a better chance of success if it includes multiple levels of communication. In developing a serial's story lines, therefore, designers should include a main plot and sub-plots that allow for the natural inclusion of these four main levels of communication:

1. **Individual-level communication** occurs when people read, write, speak, gesture with their hands or bodies, listen to messages from others, or observe what others are doing. Most theories of individual-level communication focus on how information is shaped into messages and how those messages are received, processed, and understood by others. Theories of individual-level communication consider:

   • What does a person say or do?
   • What sense does a person make of what others say or do?
   • How does a person respond to what others say or do?

   Communication research indicates that everything a person does including food choices, way of walking, and color preferences communicates something about that person to the world. Clothing, for example, reveals much about people, including the groups to which they think they belong, their self-images, and their understanding of their own social status.

   While these are all external communication signs, some theories also identify an internal level of communication that is concerned with the way a person processes ideas and information. Internal communication also indicates a great deal about a person's nature, but it cannot be observed directly; therefore it is usually inferred from what a person says or does. Dramatists commonly include external signs of internal communication to indicate what a character thinks or feels and to suggest fascinating aspects of a character's personality. For example, one character might ask another to explain some nonverbal behavior: "Why do you look away from me when I talk to you?" or "Why are you wringing your hands?"

2. **Interpersonal or small group communication** takes place between pairs of people (such as a married couple), within small groups (such as a family or household), or among somewhat larger groups of friends and strangers (such as a party or community meeting). It always involves some type of a relationship between two or more people. While individual communication focuses on what "I" or "you" say or do, interpersonal communication focuses on what "we" say or do together. This is affected by such considerations as how long the participants have known each other, how well they know each other, and what expectations and goals they bring to the interaction.

3. **Organizational or institutional communication** refers to the exchange of information and messages within or among organizations and institutions; these may include villages, communities, agencies, businesses, media, and religious groups. Organizations and institutions are larger than small groups and tend to have an administrative or bureaucratic structure and formal rules. Organizations communicate by generating reports and letters, holding meetings, making telephone calls, transmitting faxes, and sending e-mail. They also plan and implement activities, allocate and consume resources, and undertake other organizational engagements all of which are forms of communication. An organization's size, structure, resources, power, and position in the community or society influence the particular ways in which an organization communicates.

4. **Societal or cultural communication** occurs when there is an exchange and interpretation of symbols, images, and values throughout a society, usually over an extended period. News media throughout the world, for example, routinely address public concerns about politics, social values, morality, and religion. What the media say becomes a subject of public debate and private discussion, some of which is picked up, in turn, by journalists who present it in additional news coverage. This process can shift or strengthen social and political values over time. Media also can affect social and political values through non-news programs, such as radio and television dramas. Studies show that people often expect consciously or unconsciously that they will learn something about how to deal with everyday concerns from fictional entertainment programs (Diase, 1993).

   Because of its multi-plot structure, serial drama can feature these multiple levels of communication comfortably and naturally, reflecting the fact that communication about important social matters can

and does occur on more than the individual and interpersonal levels. Serial drama can strike a chord with listeners on a personal basis while, at the same time, reflecting the concerns of society as a whole. Such drama puts people in touch with their world, helping them address their personal concerns and those of society at the same time. The most successful social change dramas are those that, because of their popularity, are discussed by many people and become a part of the society's mainstream of popular culture.

The entire design team, including the writers, should appreciate the larger context of the radio drama when creating scripts. Radio dramas while written to be heard by individual listeners become part of the overall flow of information within a society. Other information from groups, organizations, and society will affect how audience members listen to, understand, and react to the drama. Some of that information will support the radio drama's message, while some will oppose it. Sometimes a radio drama is designed to be part of a larger social change project that employs multiple levels of communication. In this case, the radio script should complement and reinforce the overall flow of project activities and messages. The design document (which is described in Chapter 2) provides full details on how the drama will fit into the overall project and what levels of communication should be included in the scripts.

Modern Theories of Communication

Until the 1960s, communication theories used in programs to support social change focused primarily on the individual and interpersonal levels of communication. Contemporary research, however, shows that all four levels of communication are interconnected: society and its institutions influence individuals, who, in turn, influence the larger social and institutional groups of which they are members. For example, prevailing social values undoubtedly influence individual behavior, while individual behavior and expressions of opinion help shape social values. Therefore, more recent communication theories describe a balance across levels of communication.

Four major communication theories are relevant to radio drama for social change.

❖ **Persuasion Theory**

While its origins date back to the work of Aristotle in the 4th century B.C., modern persuasion theory (McGuire, 1987) grew out of psychological research in the late 1930s to 1950s on attitude and behavior change. Persuasion theory focuses on psychological characteristics that affect a person's perception of and response to messages, including:

- Knowledge and skills;
- Attitudes towards behavioral and social issues;
- Predispositions or preferences;
- Beliefs and concerns about the behavior and its consequences; and
- Attitudes towards the source of the message.

Many of these are related to demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnic group, income, and level of education. An understanding of them can help the design team to determine the type of messages and the type of story that are most likely to prove effective with their chosen audience.

Persuasion theory also draws attention to the importance of **message factors** and **source factors** in influencing an audience (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981). Message factors are the characteristics of a message that make it appropriate and effective for a particular audience: how long or complex it should be, what language or vocabulary is best, in what order the messages should be presented, whether one side or both sides of an issue should be presented, how much repetition is needed to get the message across, and whether the message should use fear, humor, or logic to make its point. Different audiences will have different preferences for message style.

Source factors are the characteristics of a message's source that make it interesting, relevant, and persuasive for a particular audience member. In drama, the source is the character who delivers the message. Among the most influential source factors are:

- **Credibility**—Is the character believable as the bearer of the message?
- **Attractiveness**—Is the character attractive or appealing?
- **Similarity**—Does the character have anything in common with the listeners?
- **Authority and expertise**—Does the character have the authority or expertise to be a spokesperson for the promoted behavior?

(See Chapter 5 for more on the topic of Character Development.)

Persuasion theory can help the design team make accurate determinations about the needs of the audience. It describes how audience members move toward acceptance and advocacy of a new behavior at an appropriate speed and in a natural manner. The team can then include in the Writer's Brief information (based on formative research) about the chosen audience's current attitudes toward the desired behavior change and how to move them forward.

> *For example:* Research may indicate that, while the audience is very much aware of and knowledgeable about family planning, many people do not consider adopting a contraceptive method because of traditional beliefs favoring large families. Based on this information, the design team can determine that the focus of the drama, from the outset, should be on motivating the audience to a change of attitude. It will not be necessary for the writer to start by making listeners aware of the advantages and methods of family planning.
>
> Alternatively, research may show that the chosen audience appreciates the advantages of planning the family but lacks knowledge of how to delay and space births. In this case, the emphasis of the early episodes of the serial should be on helping listeners acquire the knowledge and skills needed before they can consider adopting family planning.

The advantage of a long-running serial drama with multiple plots is that it can include characters at different stages in the process of behavior change and can follow them as they gradually accept the new behavior.

❖ Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of **reasoned action** (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) also tends to focus on the individual person, but it emphasizes the effect of social influences on personal behavior more than does persuasion theory. It states that, before deciding to try a new behavior, people carefully weigh its benefits and disadvantages and consider what other people might do or think. The two important components of reasoned action theory are:

- **Beliefs** about the consequences of a behavior. The individual asks, "What will happen to me if I take this action or try to do so?"
- **Perceived social norms** regarding the behavior. The individual asks, "What do I believe others would do about this situation? What do I believe others would want me to do?"

> *For example:* A newly married woman might recognize that preventing HIV infection would be a benefit of using condoms as contraceptives. Offsetting this is a disadvantage: asking her husband to use condoms might suggest that she does not trust her husband to be disease-free or that she herself is promiscuous. She might also believe that her husband disapproves of condom use (a negative social norm), while the local health worker strongly recommends the use of condoms in marriage (a positive social norm). According to the theory of reasoned action, the woman would be faced with two questions, "Is preventing possible HIV infection more important to me than the suggestion of infidelity?" and "Is it more important to do what my husband wants or what the health worker

recommends?" If she feels that the positive social norms outweigh the negative social norms, she might be convinced that there is social support for condom use and might opt to ask her husband to use condoms to prevent HIV/AIDS.

An appreciation of the theory of reasoned action can make writers more sensitive to the tensions that individual audience members face when making difficult decisions. The theory emphasizes that people sometimes make decisions only after considering the alternatives, not simply because someone tells them what to do. The beauty of a serial drama is that it can provide role-model characters who demonstrate the alternatives to the audience and tip the balance in favor of accepting the new behavior. The drama also can show characters undertaking difficult personal choices (related to the new behavior) similar to those facing audience members.

The writer also can use the drama to correct inaccurate perceptions of social norms that may deter listeners from trying a new behavior. In Nepal, for example, research revealed that 93 percent of husbands approved of family planning, a very high level of support. Wives, however, significantly underestimated the level of male approval, according to the theory of reasoned action, women are less likely to intend to use family planning if they perceive little social support for the practice. By correcting women's perception of limited male support for family planning, a drama could make it easier for women to decide to adopt family planning.

The theory of reasoned action also can contribute to the development of conflict and crises in a plot by reminding the writer of the difficult personal choices that characters may face with regard to social change. By recognizing and demonstrating the complexity of these choices, the writer can create a drama that echoes the reality of the lives of audience members and also assists them in coping with difficult decisions.

❖ Social Learning Theory

This theory draws attention to the social rather than the individual aspects of communication and behavior, although it is still largely concerned with how individual people make sense of the social environment and decide what to do. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1986) says that people learn by:

- **Observing** what other people do;
- Considering the **consequences** experienced by those people;
- **Rehearsing** what might happen in their own lives if they followed the other peoples' behavior;
- Taking **action** by trying the behavior themselves;
- **Comparing** their experiences with what happened to the other people;
- **Confirming** their belief in the new behavior.

For example: Mrs. X observes that her neighbor, Mrs. Y, has decided to use contraceptive implants following the death of an infant born too soon after a previous pregnancy. Mrs. X talks to Mrs. Y about the implants and finds out how Mrs. Y slowly convinced her husband to support her choice of implants. She also discusses the consequences of Mrs. Y's decision: her husband enjoys having intercourse that is not regulated by the calendar, and Mrs. Y has not experienced any adverse side effects. As she listens to her neighbor, Mrs. X mentally rehearses how she might discuss using implants with her own husband and how he might react. Based on her neighbor's positive reactions to the implants, Mrs. X decides to act on her own behalf and try them. In her first month of implant use, Mrs. X experiences some heavy bleeding. She discusses this with Mrs. Y and learns that Mrs. Y also had this difficulty (comparison with self) but dealt with it by talking with the local health worker who reassured her that it was a temporary side effect. Mrs. X is reassured and decides to visit the health worker herself. After the visit, her decision to continue with implants is confirmed.

Three important concepts related to social learning theory are: **efficacy, modeling,** and **parasocial interaction**. **Efficacy** describes a feeling of personal empowerment, of confidence in one's ability to

perform a particular deed. Efficacy increases with experience—either direct personal experience or vicarious experience gained by observing other people or by becoming emotionally involved with the characters in a drama. Drama constantly employs vicarious efficacy. As listeners become emotionally involved with a character, for example, a shy, young girl named Rose, her actions and personality inspire the listeners with the belief that "if Rose can do it, so can I."

Modeling takes place when people observe others performing a behavior either in real life or in a drama. According to social learning theory, models (also known as role models) are most effective at stimulating social learning and behavior when observers:

- Find them attractive or admirable;
- Feel they have something in common with them; and
- Have an emotional reaction to them (usually inspired by the models' expressions of emotion).

Modeling is part of the stock-in-trade of the radio drama writer, who deliberately creates role model characters whom the audience can admire and choose to copy. Sometimes the writer also creates negative models to demonstrate the unfortunate results of undesirable behavior. Negative characters can be attractive in some ways (e.g., handsome, daring, rich), even while they model the grief that may result from bad behavior. Research shows, however, that negative models are not sufficient to spur behavior change. It is essential to include positive role models. Also effective are characters who learn from their mistakes and change from being a negative to a positive role model over the course of the drama. Such a change, however, must be realistic within the cultural and social context of the character and of the listening audience.

Parasocial interaction (Horton and Wohl, 1956) takes place when people begin to think of fictional characters as if they were real people. Listeners often talk back to fictional characters on the radio as if they were in the same room and sometimes send them letters or even gifts. When, for example, two characters in the Australian agricultural serial *Blue Hills,* were pregnant, listeners sent in baby clothes that they had knitted especially for them (Black, 1995). When another character, Hilda, complained mildly about her job, she received several genuine letters from listeners offering her a better position. A good script writer takes advantage of parasocial interaction by creating believable characters who inspire listeners with a feeling of personal relationship. As a result, listeners are likely to imagine themselves as part of the drama and to experience vicariously how a behavior feels, how others might react, and how they might respond.

Social learning theory can help the drama writer identify the types of characters that most attract the audience, the consequences of behavior that people are concerned about, and the types of stories that give people increased confidence in their ability to perform a behavior.

❖ **Diffusion Theory**

Of the four communication theories discussed here, **diffusion theory** (Rogers, 1995) places the strongest emphasis on a person's social environment. It was developed to explain how a new idea or behavior spreads through a social system (usually a group or community) over time. Mass media can introduce information to a community, but it is social networks and interpersonal communication that spread information further within the community, help people evaluate it, and determine whether people act on it. Research shows that information and influence spreads through a series of interpersonal interactions among people who share similar characteristics (such as social status or experiences) or who are frequently in contact (such as friends, family members, and work mates).

According to diffusion theory, these social networks help people judge a new behavior against the following criteria:

- **Compatibility**—Is the new behavior compatible with current behaviors, beliefs, and values?
- **Complexity**—How difficult is it to perform?

- **Trialability**—Can it be tried without too much risk before making a decision?
- **Observability**—Are there opportunities to see what happens to others who adopt this behavior?
- **Comparative advantage**—Does the new behavior offer any advantage over current behavior?

Diffusion theory also indicates that the attitudes of people in a social system tend to converge over time as a new idea is more and more widely discussed. The more people know about or practice a behavior and tell others about it, the more it becomes a norm in the community.

Serial drama can make use of social diffusion theory in a number of ways:

- Through characters who demonstrate how the new behavior fits with or grows out of current beliefs and practices (compatibility);
- Through dialogue describing the new behavior in simple terms and in appropriate language for the audience (low complexity);
- Through role models who motivate listeners to try at least some aspects of the new behavior (trialability) and advocate its acceptance by others;
- Through multiple plots that show what happens to characters who adopt the new behavior and to those who do not (observability); and
- Through happy endings that demonstrate the benefits of the new behavior (comparative advantage).

The writer also can put the principles of diffusion theory to work by encouraging the interpersonal interactions that spread information throughout a society. The drama can encourage listeners to discuss the new behavior with others or approach local authorities to find out more about the new behavior.

Diffusion theory also suggests the importance of demonstrating that a behavior is commonly practiced. Sometimes, the public does not appreciate the extent to which a socially desirable practice has already diffused. If there is a general perception that few people in a community practice family planning, for example, users may choose not to talk about it. This keeps the topic of family planning off the public agenda and out of sight and reinforces the belief that few people use family planning (Taylor, 1982). A radio drama can counteract this problem by showing the reality of the situation.

Communication and the Steps to Behavior Change

Communication has a marked effect on behavior, but research shows that behavior change rarely happens immediately upon exposure to a message. Usually, people must pass through a series of steps, quickly for some people, more slowly for others, that leads to the desired behavior change. Research shows that the most effective messages begin with an understanding of where the audience is located on the steps to behavior change. They then employ the most appropriate form of communication to move the audience on to the next steps. Five steps to behavior change appear in some form in all commonly used models of communication effects: **knowledge, approval, intention, practice, and advocacy**.

1. **Knowledge** refers to being aware of and knowing how to perform behaviors promoted by a social development project. For example, parents must be

Steps to Behavior Change

5 Advocacy

4 Practice

3 Intention

2 Approval

1 Knowledge

aware that it is possible to protect their children from disease through immunization and that immunization requires treatment by a health worker. Parents also need to know where and when to obtain such treatment. Without this basic awareness and knowledge, parents are unlikely to take their children for immunization. Some behaviors require more complicated and detailed knowledge than others. For example, providing a nutritious diet for a family for a year is a more complex behavior, requiring more knowledge, than treating a child for a single bout with diarrhea. Some apparently simple behaviors actually are quite complicated. For example, the knowledge needed to put on a condom correctly is fairly simple, but the knowledge required to negotiate condom use with a sexual partner is far more complicated. The design team must provide within the Writer's Brief the right kind of knowledge and the appropriate level of detail to guide the writer with regard to message content within the story. (Chapter 2 discusses the contents of the Writer's Brief.)

2. **Approval** refers to favorable attitudes toward the behavior being promoted. People who approve of a behavior talk about it with others and tend to think that other people approve of it as well. Approval can occur at several levels: Listeners may approve of a new behavior for people in general, for friends and family, and/or for themselves personally. Some listeners may approve of the behavior for others, but not for themselves. Serial drama can include a range of role-model characters who depict public approval of a behavior, express positive emotional reactions toward a behavior, or show how personal attitudes respond to public approval.

3. **Intention to act.** The more strongly people approve of a behavior, the more likely it is that they will form an intention to act. Intention is the stage just prior to action; recognizing that the behavior fills a personal need, the person has decided to try it, but not yet changed his or her behavior. Intention does not mean that the behavior will occur always or immediately. There are degrees of intention (definitely, probably, maybe), and intention can be conditional ("I won't take her today, but if her fever doesn't go down by tomorrow, I will definitely take her to the doctor then"). The design team must identify the personal needs of the listeners that are likely to motivate their intentions to act and the conditions that make such intentions more likely.

4. **Practice** is the actual performance of a behavior. People with a high degree of intention are the most likely actually to perform a behavior. Practice need not imply confirmed or consistent behavior, however. Some people try a behavior and then reject it. Others start, stop, and start again. People who perform a behavior intermittently may have experienced unexpected or unpleasant consequences or may require support or reinforcement for their behavior. The Writer's Brief should include a description of the possible change agents that will motivate the audience to try a behavior and to persist with it. There should be recognition, also, of the likely pattern of adoption. Do members of the audience generally stick with a behavior once they try it, or do they tend to start and stop a lot before practicing a new behavior consistently? Radio scripts can model a variety of ways in which people eventually practice a behavior.

5. **Advocacy**, the final step to behavior change, is a vital part of the process because it represents a level of commitment that goes beyond the mere practice of a new behavior. Advocates tell other people about the behavior they have adopted and encourage them to adopt it, too. At the same time, talking to others can strengthen the advocate's own resolve to continue with a difficult behavior. Advocacy also allows people to express community support for a social change program. Such public expressions of support for a behavior can move people through the steps to behavior change, making them aware of a behavior (knowledge), increasing their perception of public support for a behavior (approval), motivating them to make a decision to act (intention), and encouraging them to implement that decision (practice).

Implications

Communication links people with one another and with their social environment. It serves many functions. A story told around the cooking fire, for example, simultaneously provides an opportunity for entertainment, education, socialization, and news dissemination. Modern mass media often separate these functions: some programs teach, some entertain, some mobilize. In contrast, Enter-Educate radio is a powerful form of communication that motivates while entertaining, creates bonds among community members, and sets a social agenda, while telling a story people want to hear. Radio serial drama unites the many levels of communication that operate in society.

Ultimately, it is the individual husbands, wives, young adults, health professionals, and influentials in a community who will be affected personally and directly by a drama. These people, however, associate with others in their communities: They are members of families, school classes, clans and ethnic groups, workgroups, professional associations, political parties, informal social networks, and interpersonal relationships, all of which filter, rephrase, repackage, and interpret publicly available information, including that broadcast in a radio drama. These memberships and relationships affect how people communicate, what they communicate about, and how they interpret and understand the communications of others.

Communication theories help the design team fashioning a radio serial drama to understand the social context within which all individuals act and to design the types of messages that are most likely to move audiences through the steps to behavior change. With an understanding of communication theories and the Steps to Behavior Change as their foundation, the design team can move forward confidently into the practical steps of creating a radio drama serial for social development.

Chapter One

Introduction to the Use of Radio Drama for Social Development

Radio can bring entertainment and information to people in remote rural areas.

Learning Objectives

■ To understand the value of radio serial drama as a means of disseminating social development messages.

■ To understand the importance of the Seven Cs of Communication as they relate to social development drama.

■ To understand the fundamentals of learning as related to behavior change.

■ To appreciate the strengths and limitations of radio as a communication medium.

Exercise

After studying this chapter, read the episode of *Life in Hopeful Village* in Chapter 12 and evaluate:

■ How well it adheres to the Seven Cs of Communication, and

■ How well it takes advantage of the strengths of radio.

1

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **Radio for social development**

❖ **Enter-educate serial drama**

❖ **The writers of enter-educate drama**

❖ **When does the writer become involved in the project?**

❖ **What the enter-educate writer needs to know:**

   The Seven Cs of Communication

   Blending entertainment with education

   Strengths and limitations of radio

   Fundamentals of learning

   Characteristics of learning through radio

❖ **Encouraging listening literacy**

Radio for Social Development

Radio is a universal and versatile medium of communication that can be used for the benefit of society. Throughout the world, radio has been used to encourage positive individual behavior change and constructive social change through formal lessons or didactic lectures delivered by renowned scholars and authorities. More effectively, however, radio can bring exciting, entertaining dramas into the homes and lives of millions of listeners, dramas that engage listeners' emotions while informing them of new ideas and behaviors that can improve their lives and their communities.

Enter-Educate Serial Drama

One of the most effective uses of radio for social change is "Enter-Educate" serial drama. The term "Enter-Educate" a contraction of the words "entertainment" and "education" was coined by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs. It describes any communication presentation that delivers a pro-social educational message in an entertainment format (Coleman, 1988). It is sometimes used in the full form "entertainment-education" and is similar in meaning to the term "info-tainment" common in some countries.

   The idea of combining education and entertainment is not new; examples can be found throughout history. Myths have served important functions in societies around the world (Campbell, 1973). Parables have been used by prophets and preachers to illustrate religious tenets. Fables often with animals as the central characters have been used to demonstrate the validity of moral teachings. The rhythms of poetry and song are constantly employed to help people remember information, for example, alphabet songs for small children and musical jingles in commercial advertising.

The use of radio drama for pro-social purposes is undergoing a resurgence. In the early days of radio, it was not uncommon, especially in young countries such as Australia, Canada, and South Africa, for helpful messages on such topics as agriculture and wild fire control to be incorporated into serial dramas. In Britain, *The Archers*, a serial about a farm family, played a similar role and held national attention for decades. With the advent of television, however, attention shifted to soap operas, featuring highly exaggerated characters and emotions, and radio drama went into decline.

Soap operas ruled the air waves until the mid-1970s when Miguel Sabido, in Mexico, expressed his belief that television serials could "do more than reinforce attitudes toward specific events and characters; they could also stimulate behavior" (Nariman, 1993). Sabido recognized that, while conventional soap operas presented values unconsciously and, therefore, sometimes incoherently, it would be possible to create value-coherent serials that encouraged pro-social behavior such as adult literacy or family planning without being boring, pedantic, or moralistic.

What Sabido demonstrated on Latin American television with "telenovelas" for social change has proved just as effective in radio serial drama. Radio serial writers can create dramas that have a positive effect on individual behavior and on social norms (Nariman, 1993).

The Writers of Enter-Educate Drama

Who should write Enter-Educate drama? There is no single answer to this frequently asked question. Given a choice between an expert in the subject matter of the message who lacks writing experience and an experienced writer with little technical knowledge, the experienced writer is the better choice. With an adequate Writer's Brief (see Chapter 2) to provide the necessary technical information to be contained in the scripts, experienced writers usually can create an appealing story, even on an unfamiliar subject.

Most writers have more experience with pure entertainment pieces than with Enter-Educate material. Even the most experienced entertainment writers, therefore, usually need some guidance and instruction before writing an Enter-Educate script. Writers without experience in writing radio drama should not be deterred necessarily from attempting the task, provided they can obtain adequate training.

When Does the Writer Become Involved in the Project?

In the P Process, which illustrates the steps in the development of a communication project,
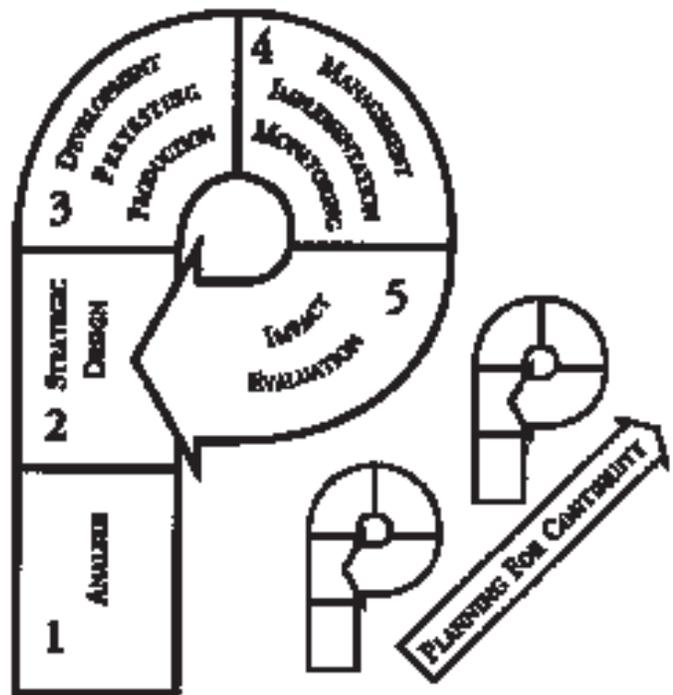
Source: JHU/PCS, 1984

the writer becomes involved during the second, or strategic design phase. During the preceding analysis phase, project planners have already:

- Reviewed potential audiences and their needs;

- Assessed existing policies and programs;

- Selected sponsoring institutions;

- Evaluated communication resources; and

When this analysis is complete, the design phase begins. At this point, project planners identify their audiences, determine project objectives, choose appropriate media channel(s), bring together collaborating organizations and creative staff including script writers and establish a design team.

The script writer's first duty is to serve as a member of the design team. The design team is responsible for specifying the exact form and content of all project materials and activities. These details are spelled out in a design document, which then guides the development and production of project materials during the third phase of the P Process. It is during this third, development and production phase that the script writer plans, drafts, tests, and revises the scripts for a drama (The design document is described in Chapter 2, while the design team is covered in more detail in the companion volume to this book, Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Program Manager's Manual.)

What the Enter-Educate Writer Needs to Know

All radio drama is a form of communication. Drama for social change is special, because its aim is not only to entertain but also to motivate positive behavior change in the audience. For this reason, writers should begin their task with an understanding of how the seven key qualities of persuasive communication can be embodied in serial drama (also see Piotrow et al., 1997)

The Seven Cs of Communication
1. **C**ommand attention.
2. **C**ater to the heart and the head.
3. **C**larify the message.
4. **C**ommunicate a benefit.
5. **C**reate trust.
6. **C**all to action.
7. Be **C**onsistent.

The Seven Cs of Communication

1. **Command attention**. Drama, with its fascinating characters and exciting plots, can attract and hold the listeners' attention throughout many episodes. Drama also can direct attention to a social message by making it stand out from all the other information a listener receives in the course of a day, by demonstrating how the message is relevant and useful to listeners, by showing that it is compatible with listeners' beliefs, and by making it attractive.

2. **Cater to the heart and the head**. Emotional involvement is every bit as important as information when it comes to attracting an audience and motivating listeners to change. An emotional response will increase the time and energy a listener spends thinking about the message. Furthermore, decisions

that are reached logically are strengthened if the decision is also emotionally rewarding. Drama has the ability to involve listeners in a range of emotional experiences as well as to provide them with information to help them to improve their lives.

3. **Clarify the message**. Messages must be clearly understood in order to be effective. Drama allows the message to be presented by various characters in language and in situations that the audience can understand and readily recall. By demonstrating the message, role-model characters make the message much clearer than any abstract description.

4. **Communicate a benefit**. Listeners will be more likely to risk trying a new behavior if they believe it has real advantages. Through role modeling by the various characters, drama can demonstrate to listeners the benefits to be gained from a change in their life styles. It can quickly illustrate the consequences, both good and bad, of various behaviors.

5. **Create trust**. As listeners become personally and emotionally involved with role-model characters in the drama, they come to see the characters as real people whom they can trust and rely upon. If the drama features experienced, knowledgeable characters who can relate to listeners' lives, then listeners will trust the message that they are delivering.

6. **Call to action**. People need encouragement to discuss new ideas, to make difficult decisions, and to attempt a new behavior. Characters in dramas have the power to inspire and motivate listeners to try a new behavior and to advocate it to their families and friends.

7. **Be consistent**. Because a detailed Writer's Brief (see Chapter 2) guides the creation of serial drama for development, the drama always delivers the message to the listening audience in a consistent, appropriate, and relevant manner no matter how many characters restate the message in how many different ways. Consistent repetition of the message helps listeners to understand new ideas, to learn how to perform a new behavior, and to rehearse mentally how they might act.

Blending Entertainment with Education

Creating radio drama for social change offers both opportunity and challenge to the writer. There is no doubt that the Enter-Educate approach can create an appealing and attractive radio serial, but writing such material is very different from writing either pure entertainment or pure instructional messages. The secret of creating an effective Enter-Educate serial drama lies in blending the entertainment format with the educational message. To create this blend, the writer needs to understand:

- The intended audience;

- The purpose and objectives of the radio drama;

- The message that the drama is to impart and the best way that it can be expressed to the intended audience;

- The multi-plot structure of a radio serial;

- The advantages of this multi-plot structure for introducing and repeating social messages naturally and subtly;

- The function of believable role-model characters as a means of conveying the message and motivating and sustaining change in the audience;

- The importance of emotion in the drama for attracting and holding the listeners' attention and for inspiring new behavior;

- Methods of fostering listening literacy (that is, learning by listening) in the radio audience; and

- The power of radio as a medium for entertainment and education.

All these aspects of writing successful radio serial drama for social development are discussed in the chapters of this book. Before beginning to write a script, however, the writer should understand how radio can be used to encourage social change.

The Meaning of Entertainment and Education

Education and entertainment have never been mutually exclusive. An examination of the meanings of the two words shows how easily and comfortably they can be used together.

The English word "entertainment" comes from the Latin word "intertenere." The prefix "inter" means "among," and the verb "tenere" means "to hold." The whole word "intertenere," therefore, has the meaning "to hold or command one's attention."

"Education" also has its origins in Latin, the prefix "e" meaning "out of" and the verb "ducere" meaning "to lead." Originally, the verb "educare" meant "to assist at the birth of a child." It now means "to rear or to raise" or, in other words, "to lead a person forward or encourage a person's growth and development."

"Enter-educate," therefore, can be defined as "commanding the attention of the audience while encouraging their growth and development," and enter-educate serial drama can be understood as a powerful method of motivating positive social change and personal development.

It is worth noting that "entertainment" does not necessarily imply "amusement." A wide range of emotions and situations can attract and hold the attention of listeners (see Chapter 3).

The Strengths and Limitations of Radio

Radio, like every other communication medium, has its own characteristics, strengths, and limitations.

Strengths of Radio	Limitations of Radio
1. Radio is based in oral tradition. Every culture has traditions of story telling, and the fascination of listening to a good tale well told has never been lost. Even today, when television is so widespread, people in many cultures experience much of their entertainment through listening. A successful radio serial writer knows how to use this tradition to create an intriguing story that attracts and holds a listening audience.	1. The total experience of radio is received by the ear alone. This is in contrast to the multisensory perception of everyday life. The writer therefore must remember to fill in details that, in real life, would be provided by the listeners' other senses, such as vision or smell. The writer must create scripts that allow listeners to imagine what they are hearing.
2. Radio appeals to and relies upon the imagination of the listeners. The radio writer is not limited by what the audience can see, so there is ample opportunity to invite listeners to imagine a wide range of people, places, and events. A good radio writer knows how to tap into the imaginations of the listeners by creating strong word pictures, engaging characters, and action-filled events.	2. Listeners are accustomed to using radio as a background to their lives, without paying full attention to what is being broadcast. When radio is used to motivate positive social change, the writer must be sure to attract and hold the listeners' full attention, and to encourage listening literacy (discussed later in this chapter).
3. Radio can cross time and space without limit. The radio writer can move through time freely and create environments without restriction, as long as they seem appropriate to the audience. For example, listeners in a remote rural village can "visit" and understand the inside of a large city airport if word pictures and sound effects are used effectively.	3. Radio offers great opportunities for the use of sound effects and music. The good radio writer, however, uses these aids judiciously, recognizing that overuse of sound can be more destructive than constructive on radio. Successful radio drama depends more on powerful dialogue and strong emotional attraction than on added noise.
4. Radio can go places and evoke images that are impossible in real life, or even on stage and television. For example, a radio writer can transport listeners to the inside of a whale, to the surface of the moon, or to the world of a microbe.	4 Radio can be used to teach many things, but there are some areas where it falls short. For example, it would be difficult for a doctor to learn how to remove an appendix just by listening to a radio program. To overcome such difficulties, the writer should recommend support materials in other media (such as print) if the subject cannot be dealt with adequately through radio alone.
5. Radio is a personal medium. Although it can reach millions of listeners at the same time, radio nevertheless has the power to speak to each listener individually. The good radio writer recognizes that radio's message can be heard by people en masse and, at the same time, can be interpreted personally by each individual listener.	5. A radio story or message is heard only once. The radio cannot be rewound like an audio cassette or turned back like the pages of a book. The radio writer, therefore, must ensure clarity, simplicity, and repetition in the delivery of important messages or educational information.

Fundamentals of Learning

Writing a radio serial for social development does not require experience as a teacher. It does require, however, an understanding of the following fundamentals of learning, especially adult learning, since most dramas for social change are created for adult audiences.

1. **Relevance**. People, particularly adults, learn best when they see that the information offered is relevant to their own lives. This makes the choice of characters for an Enter-Educate drama significant. Listeners who identify themselves with role-model characters in the drama are more likely to be motivated to learn and to change. (The section on "Social Learning Theory" in the Prologue discusses the importance of role models, while Chapter 5 reviews the range of characters from which a writer may choose.)

2. **Appropriate pacing**. Instruction is most effective when it is delivered at a pace appropriate to the learners, keeping them involved and stimulated without overwhelming them. Determining the correct pacing requires an intimate knowledge of the audience and a real understanding of the information to be taught. (See the section on "Persuasion Theory" in the Prologue for more on matching the message to the audience.) Careful evaluation of audience reaction to the pilot programs can help radio writers ensure that the pace with which information is delivered is appropriate to the audience. (Testing of pilot programs is discussed in Chapter 10.)

3. **Incremental learning**. Learning is almost always incremental, that is, certain basic steps are mastered before more complex steps can be understood and practiced. For example, it is impossible to sew two pieces of fabric together without first learning how to thread a needle. Similarly, it is impossible to control the spread of malaria without understanding, first, that a certain type of mosquito carries the disease and, second, how to control the mosquitos. In motivating changes in individual behavior and social norms, it is important to understand current levels of knowledge and attitudes in the community. Only with this understanding will the writer know what style of program to create, where to focus the instruction, and how to adjust that focus as the serial drama progresses.

   The writer should understand the Steps to Behavior Change, that is, the steps that a person or a community takes while moving from ignorance of a new behavior to full acceptance and advocacy of it. (These steps and how the writer can make the best use of them are discussed in the Prologue.)

4. **Distributed learning**. Different people learn in different ways. Some learn from direct instruction, while others learn better by observing and copying the behavior of peers. Some absorb information after only one exposure, while others need to hear and see it a number of times before fully accepting it. "Distributed learning" is the term educators use to describe the process of presenting the same information in several different ways over time (de Fossard et al. 1993). Allowing for

distributed learning involves determining how much time (e.g., how many episodes) will be spent on each of the major steps of learning and which pieces of information will have to be repeated and how often.

5. **The Four Ts of Teaching (Tell, Teach, Try, and Test).** Lessons should follow these four clear steps:

    * **Tell** the "students" what they will learn;
    * **Teach** the necessary knowledge and skills;
      (Teaching, of course, can take many forms, including the use of role-model characters in serial drama.)
    * Let the "students" **try**, that is, practice, what they have been taught; and
    * **Test** their learning by seeing how much they can do on their own and how willing they are to use what they have learned.

    Then, if necessary, re-teach and re-try. The Enter-Educate radio writer should subtly reflect these steps in moving from the beginning to the end of a radio serial.

6. **Involvement and interactivity**. People learn better when they are involved totally in the learning experience, when they have the opportunity to interact with instructors or other learners, and when they can express their thoughts, opinions, and questions. Involvement and interactivity can and should take place during each of the four steps of teaching. (Interactivity in radio programs is discussed in Chapter 9.)

Characteristics of Learning Through Radio

In many developing countries, listening skills are better developed than in so-called technological countries where, with the spread of print materials, television, and computers, learning has become less oral and more visual. Nevertheless, learning through radio presents certain difficulties to both instructor and learners, even in developing countries. Most radio audiences are not "listening literate." That is, they are not accustomed to learning from radio programs. The radio writer faces the following obstacles in teaching through radio:

* The use of radio as "background." As already mentioned, much of the time listeners do not really concentrate on what is being broadcast on the radio. Writers need to motivate the audience to listen with full attention. While the entertaining serial format helps to attract and hold listeners' attention, it is equally important to ensure that listeners appreciate the relevance of the message and its potential for improving their lives.

* Informational messages on the radio usually take the form of spot announcements or talks by important people. Most listeners mentally tune out these messages if they have no immediate relevance to their own lives, and they tune in again when music, news, or something of personal interest comes on the air. They listen in a fragmentary manner, picking and choosing—often quite arbitrarily and unconsciously—which information to absorb and which to ignore. For this reason, the writer must introduce social messages subtly and naturally.

- Radio is a one-way medium. Audio directors, actors, and program designers cannot receive immediate feedback from listeners during a broadcast, unlike classroom teachers or participants in a conversation. They cannot respond immediately to listeners' questions or behavior by changing the pace or direction of the message, nor can they stop to enquire if the information is understood fully. It is difficult, therefore, to ensure that learning is taking place and that listeners have the chance to clarify what they have misunderstood. Both distributed learning and interactive involvement help overcome this problem. The following guidelines also can help encourage listening literacy.

Encouraging Listening Literacy

1. Allow the audience to get to know a few characters well especially the major character of the main plot and the central uniting character (see Chapter 5) before introducing the message. If audience members have come to trust and like some characters (possibly including a villain whose antics listeners find enjoyable), they are more likely to listen and believe when these same characters begin to introduce information about new concepts and practices.

> ### Guidelines for Encouraging Listening Literacy
>
> 1. Introduce a few characters at a time.
>
> 2. Attract attention at the beginning of each episode.
>
> 3. Avoid overloading the drama with the message.
>
> 4. Repeat important parts of the message in different ways.
>
> 5. Provide ways for listeners to respond.
>
> 6. Recapitulate previous episodes.

2. Attract the listeners' attention at the beginning of each episode. Because so many listeners use radio as "background," the writer should start each scene, particularly the first scene in each episode, with a hook, that is, a dramatic action or statement that grabs the listener's attention. (Use of the hook is discussed in Chapter 3.)

3. Avoid overloading the serial with the message. Keep the message brief and subtle. Some writers like to use, as a guideline, a ratio of 25 percent message to 75 percent story in each episode. It is possible to increase the ratio of message to story, however, if the message is introduced as a natural part of the story and is delivered in small pieces rather than in large chunks. (Blending the message and the story naturally is discussed in Chapter 4.)

4. Repeat the important parts of the message. Use the multi-plot nature of the serial format to bring in the message repeatedly, in different ways with different characters. This allows listeners who were not paying full attention the first time to hear the message on another occasion.

5. Offer the audience ways to respond to or interact with the program. There are a number of ways in which listeners can become involved in the program. Listeners can respond orally, for example, with physical activities, or in writing. (Encouraging interaction is discussed in Chapter 9.)

6. Provide a brief recap at the beginning of each episode to remind listeners what took place in the previous episode. Then, they will not be deterred from listening if they cannot remember what has been happening in the story. Keep the recap brief, however, and start the action as soon as possible. (The recap is covered in Chapter 3.)

   The effort that the writer must put into developing the listening literacy of the audience varies from culture to culture. Research during the analysis phase of the project usually reveals some information about the listening ability of the audience and their familiarity with learning by radio. Writers can learn more about audience listening habits and preferences during visits to the community and during pilot tests. (Testing pilot programs is discussed in Chapter 10.)

The serial drama format is an excellent medium for overcoming many of the difficulties of learning by radio because it includes:

- A strong and relevant story;
- Exciting, believable characters;
- A wide range of emotional stimulation; and
- A variety of ongoing plots.

Each of these essential elements of the radio serial drama is discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

Chapter Summary

Radio is a universal and versatile medium, well suited to the delivery of programs encouraging social change.

- Enter-Educate serial dramas combine entertainment and education in a format that can be highly attractive to a listening audience.

- The Enter-Educate approach has been popular throughout history, as can be seen in traditional enjoyment of myths, parables, fables, and theater.

- Writers of Enter-Educate serials should have some training or preparation before taking on the writing of a radio serial drama.

- The Enter-Educate drama writer should know the audience, purpose, objectives, and message of the specific drama.

- Enter-Educate writers should understand and appreciate the multiplot structure of a radio serial and its advantages, the value of believable role-model characters, the importance of emotion, the methods of fostering listening literacy, and the strengths and weaknesses of radio as a medium for entertainment and education.
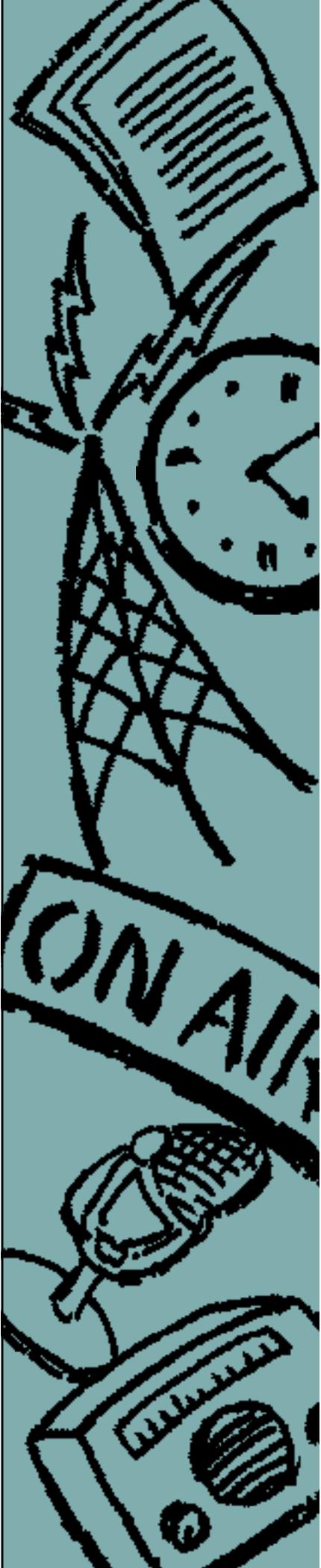
Chapter Two

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Writing Begins: The Writers' Brief

Learning Objectives

■ To understand and recognize the two main types of radio programs for social development.

■ To know the components of the Writer's Brief and to understand the importance of the Writer's Brief for the writer.

■ To know how to use the Writer's Brief during script writing.

■ To know the members of the writer's support team and how each one can assist the writer.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, prepare a Writer's Brief for a subject of your choice. Determine whether the serial drama will be a nontechnical or technical knowledge program. Delineate the precise message content of the program, specifying words and terms that should be defined in the glossary and preparing the exact glossary terms as the writer should use them.

Your goal is to prepare a blueprint that any experienced writer could use to begin putting together a successful Enter-Educate serial, whether or not that writer has prior knowledge of the intended message.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **Program types:**

    Nontechnical programs
    Technical knowledge programs

❖ **The design document and Writer's Brief**

❖ **Contents of the Writer's Brief:**

    Rationale for the desired change in behavior

    Audience information

    Justification of the chosen medium

    Measurable objectives

    Project purpose

    Overall message

    Number and duration of programs

    Message scope and sequence

    Episode objectives and purposes

    Content details

    Glossary

    Script support team

    Support materials

    Time line

Program Types

Radio dramas used for social development generally fall into one of two categories: **nontechnical programs and technical knowledge programs.**

Nontechnical Programs

Nontechnical programs usually are prepared for a general audience that is not required to learn and recall specific, detailed information. The purposes of a nontechncial program are to explain the importance and relevance of a new behavior (such as limiting family size) to audience members, to encourage them to seek more information from a local source, and to motivate them to adopt the practice. Project initiators hope that at the end of a nontechnical radio serial the audience will:

• Have a generally positive attitude to the ideas presented;

• Be eager to pursue them further;

- Be motivated to discuss the ideas with family and community members;
- Know where to go to obtain further information; and
- Be willing and ready to adopt the behavior.

The audience is not expected to learn and recall specific technical details, as they are in a technical knowledge series.

> ***For example:*** A nontechnical radio drama produced in Indonesia was designed to introduce the concept of a prosperous family and to encourage listeners to take steps to overcome poverty. The program, entitled *Butir Butir Pasir Di Laut (Grains of Sand in the Sea)*, sought to:
>
> - Help community members understand a new term: "the prosperous family;"
> - Encourage community members and midwives to use the term;
> - Explain the main characteristics of "the prosperous family;"
> - Encourage listeners to talk with local health workers about "the prosperous family;"
> - Instruct listeners in how to apply for government start-up loans so they could become involved in small businesses of their own.

The only specific facts the audience was required to learn were where to go for more information on making your family prosperous and how to apply for a government loan.

Technical Knowledge Programs

Technical knowledge programs are designed to teach specific skills and new practices to a chosen audience. They are frequently used for distance education, with listeners expected to recall the information accurately and use it correctly. Before preparing this type of program, researchers must measure as precisely as possible the existing knowledge, attitudes, and practices of a sample of the chosen audience. At the serial's end, the audience's acquisition of new technical information is measured once again for any change.

> ***For example:*** The Bangladeshi radio magazine, *Under the Green Umbrella*, included a serial drama designed to reinforce field workers' skills. Other segments of the radio program gave field workers specific training in working with community members, counseling couples on child spacing, and assisting clients with difficulties they might experience during contraceptive use. These skills were then demonstrated and reinforced in the drama. Field workers who listened to the drama were expected to learn and be able to use:
>
> - Specific interpersonal communication skills;
> - Detailed knowledge of how to help clients choose and use contraceptive methods; and
> - Particular steps to take to reach and work with community members to encourage both personal and community development.

The Design Document and the Writer's Brief

In the preparation of both nontechnical and technical knowledge programs, writers need clear guidelines about message content. This information is compiled in a Writer's Brief, which is part of the full design document that should be drawn up for every radio serial designed to promote social change.

The design document, which is assembled by the project's design team, is a written statement of all the information that will guide the design, writing, production, and evaluation of every episode in the radio serial. (More information about the design team, the design workshop, and the design document can be found in the companion volume to this book, *Radio Serial Drama for Social Change: Program Manager's Manual.*)

1. Statement of and rationale for the **change in individual behavior and social norms** that the project wishes to encourage;
2. Information about the **intended audience(s)**;
3. Justification of the **intended medium** or media;
4. **Measurable objectives** of the serial as a whole;
5. **Purpose** of the serial as a whole;
6. **Overall message** of the serial and its main focus;
7. **Number of programs** in the serial;
8. **Duration** of each program;
9. **Message scope and sequence;**
10. **Number of programs** to be devoted to each topic;
11. **Measurable objectives** of each program or group of programs;
12. **Purpose** of each program or group of programs;
13. **Precise message content** of each program or group of programs;
14. A **glossary** listing topic-specific words and terms, together with the definitions the writers should use to ensure that these words and terms are understood by the intended audience;
15. Designation of a **script review** panel and **script support team**;
16. A listing of any **support materials** that will be used;
17. **Promotion plans** and decisions about prizes or **incentives** to be used to encourage the listening audience;
18. The **monitoring and evaluation plan;**
19. A **time line** for:
    - writing scripts and support materials,
    - review and rewriting,
    - writing, producing, and editing pilot programs,
    - testing pilot programs,
    - rewriting and re-producing programs,
    - ongoing writing, review, and production of all scripts,
    - broadcast,
    - ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and
    - final evaluation.
20. Story treatment outlining the drama in narrative form and sample episode.

The finished design document also lists the names of the members of the design team and all those in authority (at various ministries and organizations) who gave their support or assistance during the design phase.

Ideally, the writers—who are members of the design team—should be given copies of the entire design document when it is complete. It is essential that they be given all but the promotion and monitoring and evaluation plans as a Writer's Brief before they start any script writing, including preparation of pilot programs.

Contents of the Writer's Brief

The Writer's Brief must include all the following information:

1. **Rationale for the desired change in behavior.** For all social development programs, whether nontechnical or technical knowledge programs, the writer must begin with a clear understanding of the type of behavior change the serial hopes to motivate in the listening audience and the reasons that this change is considered important.

2. **Audience information**. The brief should supply two types of information about the intended audience. **Initial research** provides reliable information on the audience's current understanding of and attitudes toward the desired new behavior, on their willingness and ability to adopt it, and on personal characteristics. It may also provide information on current social norms. This information comes from qualitative research and/or a baseline survey conducted by trained researchers during the analysis phase of the project.

    The second type of information is the **audience profile**, which provides a wider range of facts about the audience's lifestyle. Where possible, writers should compile these profiles themselves, perhaps in collaboration with a trained researcher. In some countries, much of this information already may have been compiled for previous projects, and such materials certainly should be made available to the writer although they can never replace the writer's firsthand knowledge of the audience. The point of these profiles is not so much to collect hard data as for writers to gain a personal sense of, or feeling for, the audience members; this will ensure that the serial truly is for and about them. While the full list of characteristics in the profile depends on the nature of the community and its culture as well as the topic and overall objectives of the serial, an audience profile typically includes information on:

    - Language, including dialect, commonly used expressions, and proverbs;
    - Levels of education for women and men and attitudes toward education;
    - Typical occupations for women and men;
    - Average number of children per family;
    - Economic status;
    - Cultural background;
    - Customs and strength of adherence to traditional behavior;

- Religion;
- Environment (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural) and attitudes toward the environment;
- Respected authority figures, decision-makers, and influential citizens;
- Extent and types of community involvement;
- Entertainment sources and preferences, if any;
- Access to media, such as radio, television, film, newspapers, and magazines;
- Typical daily food, including meal times and habits; and
- Meeting places.

3. **Justification of the chosen medium**. The writer should understand why radio has been chosen as the medium (or one of the media) for the project's message. The dramatized story will be affected depending on whether radio is being used because:
   - The audience is largely illiterate;
   - The audience lives a long distance from central health services;
   - Radio is the only medium that can reach them with this information;
   - Radio is their favorite medium; or
   - They enjoy radio drama.

4. **Measurable objectives**. Measurable objectives are the hoped-for end results of a radio drama, that is, what the audience will know, will believe, and will do as a result of listening to the serial. Development projects can have a wide range of measurable objectives, but, for the writer's purposes, they fall into three general categories. By the end of the serial, audience members should demonstrate:
   - **Knowledge** of the new behavior;
   - Positive **attitudes** and **intentions** toward the new behavior; and/or
   - New behavioral **practices**.

As the Steps to Behavior Change in prologue indicate, changes in attitude and intention typically follow improved knowledge and precede behavior changes. Classifying measurable objectives into these three categories is an over-simplification, because change involves a sequence of many smaller steps. Nevertheless, this classification gives the writer an understanding of the general.

Measurable objectives for a nontechnical serial differ markedly from those for a technical knowledge serial, as demonstrated by the family planning examples given below. In nontechnical programming, the measurable objectives are likely to be fairly general, usually along the following lines:

Objectives of a Nontechnical Family Planning Drama

As a result of this serial, members of the audience will:

- **Know** the advantages of planning a family and the availability of contraceptive choices;

- Have a positive **attitude** toward family planning and want to learn more about it, both from future episodes of the drama and from visiting their local services providers;

- Put their new interest into **practice** by listening to future episodes, by talking about the serial and about family planning with family and friends, and by visiting a local health post for further informatio; and

- **Practice** and advocate family planning.

In contrast, the measurable objectives for a technical knowledge serial are likely to be more detailed and demanding. In a distance education serial for health care providers, for example, the measurable objectives might be:

Objectives of a Technical Knowledge Serial on Family Planning

By the end of this serial, health care providers will:

- **Know** and be able to share with clients details of how six temporary and permanent contraceptive methods prevent pregnancy;

- **Know** and be able to inform clients accurately about the advantages and disadvantages of each method;

- **Know** how to and be able to counsel and screen clients who seek help in choosing a contraceptive;

- Have an **attitude** of confidence in their ability to counsel clients appropriately and to communicate accurate information;

- Develop an **attitude** of self-worth and self-respect because of increased confidence in their abilities;

- **Practice** effective counseling techniques to help clients choose and use family planning methods;

- **Practice** other effective communication skills with their clients;

- **Practice** encouraging regular and follow-up visits from their clients; and

- **Practice** politeness, respect, encouragement, and support while working with their clients.

    These examples show why the writer needs to know exactly what changes the project hopes to encourage in the audience. The complexity and rigorousness of the objectives have a marked effect on the type of story the writer will create, the amount of factual information that will be included in each program, the rate at which educational information will be delivered, and the way in which characters in the story will depict the desired skills and behaviors.

5. **Project purpose.** While the measurable objectives detail a project's goals, the **project purpose statement** explains what approaches should be used to encourage the audience to achieve those objectives. It helps the writer understand how the serial must be constructed to enable the listeners to meet the project objectives.

    For example: A group of parents want to teach their children to cross

the road safely. Their **measurable objectives** are that, by the end of the training, the children will:

- **Know** that road traffic is dangerous;
- **Know** that they can help to protect themselves from road traffic dangers by always obeying certain rules;
- **Know** the rules for crossing a road;
- Have an **attitude** of security and confidence when it comes to crossing the road; and
- Will put their knowledge into **practice** by always crossing the road correctly.

Once the objectives are set, the parents must decide what approach to take to help the children to achieve these goals. In other words, the parents must determine the purpose of their communication. The parents might decide, for example, on the following purposes:

- **To inform** their children of the number of youngsters killed on the road each year;
- **To list** repeatedly the rules that their children should learn about crossing the road; and
- **To threaten** to punish the children if they do not learn how to cross the road correctly.

On the other hand, the parents might choose to reach their objectives by setting more positive purposes, such as the following:

- **To make** the children aware that, while dangers exist in crossing the road, there are steps they can take to avoid the dangers;
- **To teach** the children simple safety rules;
- To help the children learn the safety rules with attractive and easily remembered rhymes;
- **To encourage** the children to play games using the safety rhymes;
- **To demonstrate**, through role modeling in stories, how the safety rules are effective;
- **To provide** incentives for children to learn and use the rules; and
- **To motivate** the children to share their knowledge and experience with peers.

Nontechnical versus technical knowledge projects. In a nontechnical project, the purpose statement is likely to include one or more of the following points:

- **To make** audience members **aware** of a desired behavior that could improve their lives;
- **To motivate** community involvement in dealing with a problem, e.g., environmental depletion, pollution, or maternal health;
- **To increase awareness** and understanding of desired behaviors;
- **To reinforce** and strengthen **behaviors** and **attitudes** that some community members are already adopting;
- **To overcome** fears and misunderstandings of the desired behavior; or
- **To encourage** advocacy of the desired behaviors and attitudes.

Technical knowledge projects frequently have several purposes. The purpose statement might resemble the following example, which was taken from the design document for a distance education serial for rural health workers:

- To teach health workers specific skills of communicating with and counseling clients on choosing a contraceptive method;
- To ensure that health workers can recall and use correct screening methods when assisting clients to choose a contraceptive method;
- To upgrade health workers' knowledge of the newest contraceptive methods and to motivate them to learn, recall, and use this knowledge correctly; and
- To provide higher qualification opportunities for health workers.

If a project has more than one purpose, the Writer's Brief should specify whether the scripts should present the various purposes sequentially or simultaneously.

   Without a clear understanding of the project's purpose, based on audience and social needs identified by the baseline study, the writer can only guess at the degree of change the project hopes for and the speed and frequency with which the serial should deliver the information leading to change.

6. **The overall message and its main emotional focus**. Every Enter-Educate radio serial has an **overall message** such as, "A planned family leads to a better quality of life for individual family members and for the community at large." Different episodes stress different aspects of the overall message. Some programs might focus on delaying motherhood until age 18, the health benefits of spacing births, or the economic advantages of smaller families. The writer must make sure, however, that throughout the serial the listeners receive the overall message that a planned family improves the quality of life for everyone.

   The Writer's Brief should also specify which **emotion** or **moral value** will underlie the serial as a whole. A family planning drama, for example, might focus on the emotion of happiness as the role-model characters enjoy improved health and increased prosperity as a result of child spacing. Alternatively, it might stress the moral value of selflessness, for instance, when a husband agrees to limit the size of his family to improve the well-being of his wife and children. (A further explanation of emotional focus can be found in the notes on "theme" in Chapter 3.)

   Without an overall message and emotional focus to link the multiple plots together, the writer might create a serial that jolts along from one event to another without cohesion.

7. and 8. **Number and duration of programs**. The writer must know from the outset the duration of each program (usually 20 to 30 minutes for a radio serial) and the number of episodes planned. If the serial is to continue indefinitely, the writer should have a clear understanding of the treatment (see below) of at least the first year's programs before any writing begins.

9. and 10. **Message scope and sequence**. This part of the design document lists the major topics to be covered during the entire serial and the order in which they should be addressed, if a particular order is important. It should also tell the writer how many programs to devote to each topic and when certain topics should be repeated over the course of the serial.

11. and 12. **Objectives and purposes by episode**. In addition to the overall objectives and purposes of the serial, writers also need to know the specific objectives and purposes for each episode or each group of episodes. The Writer's Brief for technical knowledge programs usually spells out objectives and purposes for each episode individually. For nontechnical dramas, however, objectives and purposes typically are given for groups of five or six episodes.

13. **Content details**. This is the section of the Writer's Brief that differs most greatly between nontechnical and technical knowledge programs. For nontechnical programs, the content details may be fairly general, and the writer can be given a reasonable amount of freedom in the way in which they are incorporated into the story. For example, the following content details cover the early episodes of a nontechnical serial on the general subject of family planning.

EXAMPLE

Content Details for Nontechnical Serial on Family Planning

Episodes 1- 4

Topic: What Are the Advantages of Family Planning?

1. Family planning is important for the mother. The appropriate spacing of children allows the mother to regain and maintain her health between births. Women who give birth at too-short intervals frequently become weak and unhealthy.

2. Family planning is important for each child. If children are spaced so that each child is given two to three years of proper nourishment and attention before another is born, he/she will have a good chance of growing up to be healthy, strong, and educated.

3. Limiting the number of children in a family enhances the economic stability of the family and makes it possible for all family members to have a better chance of enjoying an adequate living standard.

4. Limiting the number of children provides both husband and wife with greater opportunities for leisure and self development.

Technical knowledge programs, in contrast, demand far more precise content details, because they are designed to teach specific technical information to listeners. The Writer's Brief must detail not only the information to be included, but also the sequence in which it should be presented, the pace at which it should be delivered, and the frequency with which it should be repeated. The following example, which comes from the design document for an Enter-Educate serial to educate rural

health workers in Nepal, demonstrates the type of content detail needed for a technical knowledge program. It describes the content of the first of three episodes on the intrauterine device (IUD).

EXAMPLE

Content Details for Technical Knowledge Program on Family Planning

Episode #31
Topic: Modern Contraceptive Methods, IUD (1)

What Is the IUD?
Remind health workers of the importance of covering all essential points in discussing modern contraceptive methods with clients (See Program #13).

Explain that the IUD is a long-acting, temporary modern contraceptive method for women. It is a small device made of plastic and copper that is inserted into the uterus by a specially trained Health Worker.

How Does it Work?
It prevents pregnancy for up to 10 years. The IUD prevents pregnancy by preventing the sperm from reaching the egg.

Advantages
- Very effective
- Immediately effective, long-term protection up to 10 years
- No extra supplies needed by client
- Immediate return of fertility upon removal
- Suitable for breast-feeding women
- Convenient; does not interfere with intercourse

Disadvantages
(In the scripts, "disadvantages" were referred to as "Special Considerations" or "Bodily Changes" in order to overcome the negative suggestion of the word "disadvantages.")

- Requires a specially trained health worker to insert and remove
- Woman needs to check the string after each menstrual period to make sure the IUD is still in place
- Woman cannot remove it on her own
- The IUD may come out of the uterus through the cervical canal and be expelled into the vagina. This is not common and usually happens within the first month.

The IUD cannot travel or move around inside the body. (Stress and repeat this last fact several times).

- Greater risk of pelvic infection with IUD users who have a recent history of STDs, and for those who have multiple sex partners
- May cause increased menstrual bleeding

The message content of every episode of the serial, including the other two programs on the IUD, was described in equal detail in the Writer's Brief. Therefore, the writer knew exactly what information should be included in each episode and the way it should be stated. Detailing the technical content of the programs in this way enhances rather than hinders the writer's creativity. It frees the writer from searching through reference books for technical information and lets the writer concentrate on creating an entertaining story to carry the educational information in the most natural and appropriate way. Providing content details also eliminates the risk that the writer will include contradictory information gathered from different sources.

14. **A glossary of specific terminology.** The Writer's Brief must include a **glossary** explaining exactly how technical terms and words are to be used or defined in the local language. The glossary is equally important for

nontechnical and technical knowledge programs. Glossary definitions usually cannot be copied from one country to another, even when programs focus on a universal topic, such as education or family planning. Each entry should employ the words and definition most appropriate for the culture, language, and experience of the chosen audience. The definition of "vasectomy," for example, would be far different in a program directed to a general rural population in Bangladesh than for a distance education series designed for physicians in Nigeria.

The glossary also reduces potential problems with sensitive or taboo words, such as the words used to describe the male or female sex organs. By giving the appropriate word or phrase, the glossary eliminates the possibility that the writer inadvertently will use a word that is unacceptable either to the audience or to the broadcast station.

The writer will find the glossary easier to use if terms are listed in alphabetical order. It is also helpful to asterisk words that have glossary definitions whenever they are used in the body of the Writer's Brief.

15. **Script review panel and script support team**. It is helpful, but not essential, for writers to know who will be reviewing their scripts. **This script review** panel is a small group of people comprising the program manager, content advisor, ministry representative, radio director, and possibly a drama critic.

Writers must know the members of the **script support team** so that they can call on them for help when needed. Members of the script support team are drawn from the design team, so they are familiar with the project and the needs of the script. The script support team should include the:

- **Program manager**, who has the final say about all matters relating to the development, writing, and production of the serial and who can direct the writer to other people for further assistance. (In some countries, the program manager will have the title of producer or executive producer.)

- **Audience representative**, who can provide quick answers to questions about the suitability of a script's story, characters, or language. It is helpful to have an audience representative on the support team even though the writer knows or has visited members of the audience.

- **Content specialist**, who is a recognized authority on the message content of the serial. Whenever possible, the program manager should identify a single person from the design team to be the final authority on all matters of content. Consulting multiple content advisors is frustrating, confusing, and a waste of time and money.

- **Audio director**, who can advise the writer about the availability of actors, the limitations of sound effects or other production techniques, and the suitability of the script for the medium of radio. (In some countries, the audio director will be known as the radio producer.)

- **Evaluator**, who can advise whether the script will enable the audience to meet the measurable objectives. This position is especially helpful to the writer when the effect of the serial's message on the audience is to be measured quantitatively.

- **Researcher** (**or research information**), who can clarify how the findings of the formative evaluation conducted during the analysis phase of the project relate to the presentation of information in the program. (The same person may serve as both researcher and evaluator.)

- **Ministry or government representative**, who may be necessary in some projects to ensure that the words or concepts included in the scripts do not contravene current ministry or government policy. Even when a government representative has served on the design team, the writer should maintain contact with a designated ministry staff member who can answer any questions that arise.

  Depending on the nature of the project, it may be necessary to include other people in the support team. Those listed above generally are sufficient to provider the writer with adequate back-up.

16. **Support materials**. Writers must know what, if any, support materials will be available to the listening audience, so that the scripts can refer to these materials at appropriate moments. All information and terminology in the scripts should be consistent with that used in the support materials.

19. **Time line**. Writers should be consulted about how much time will be needed to write and revise scripts, and their needs should be incorporated into a time line covering all aspects of programming from the initial writing to the broadcast and evaluation of the programs. Writers should be aware that adhering to this time line is critical to the success of the radio project. It is essential that writers help determine a realistic time line and that they notify the program manager the moment any problem occurs that might disrupt the time line.

The time line for the creation of an Enter-Educate radio serial covers a number of vital steps, and ample time must be allowed for each one. The actual number of days or weeks needed for each step will vary from project to project, but adequate time must be allowed for the following steps:

Step 1: Design	Step 2: Pilot Preparation	Step 3: Continuous Activities
• Design team workshop • Writing of design document • Approval of design document and Writer's Brief	• Writing story treatment • Approval of treatment • Writing pilot program(s) • Script translation, if needed • Audio production of pilot program(s) • Testing pilot program(s) • Script revision • Re-production and retesting if needed	• Script writing • Typing scripts • Script review • Script revisions and retyping, possibly including translation • Audio production and editing, including rehearsals • Copying from master tape • Filing/storing archive tapes

These are the components of the time line that most affect the writers. There will be separate time lines for audio production, promotional materials preparation, monitoring, and evaluation. (A sample time line is included in the companion volume to this book, *Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Program Manager's Manual.*)

20. **Story treatment** and **sample episode**. The treatment is an outline or synopsis of the drama presented as a narrative or story, rather than in dramatic form. It is written after the rest of the design document is completed. Some design teams also like to include a sample script of a typical episode in the design document. This is prepared by the script writer and illustrates the drama's format and characters.

Chapter Summary

■ There are two main types of radio serial for social development: nontechnical programs and technical knowledge programs.

■ Nontechnical programs focus on increasing the audience's awareness of and interest in a new pro-social behavior.

■ Technical knowledge programs, which are often used for distance education, require listeners to learn, recall, and use specific information.

■ The writer bases the design and content of the educational aspects of Enter-Educate programs on information contained in the Writer's Brief.

■ The Writer's Brief is part of a larger design document drawn up by the design team; it includes all the information needed to provide a solid foundation for the radio serial, and includes details about the audience, the objectives and purpose of the project as a whole and of each episode, the message content, and a time line.

■ A script support team is available to advise the writer on content, audience, audio production, and government policy.

Chapter Three

Characteristics of Radio Serial Drama

Radio drama can appeal to people of all ages.

Learning Objectives

- To understand how a typical entertainment drama is constructed and the ways in which Enter-Educate drama serials are similar to and different from entertainment dramas.

- To appreciate the multi-plot nature of the serial and its advantages for pro-social communication.

- To understand and be able to use the structure of a typical episode in a radio serial drama.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, create a short story (it is easier to start with a narrative than a drama) based on the structure and components listed in this chapter. Be sure that the story disseminates a message, that it has a universal theme, and that the dramatic conflict evolves from the personality of the leading character.

Test the story on a "sample audience" to identify its strengths and weaknesses, and revise it, if necessary. Once you are satisfied that the story is successful, create two or three sub-plots that could accompany the story if it were to become a serial. Demonstrate how each sub-plot contributes to the message in a manner different from that of the other plots. Write a brief treatment of all the plots.

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Topics in This Chapter

- ❖ **The meaning of drama**
- ❖ **Dramatic conflict**
- ❖ **Components of a drama**
- ❖ **The structure of a drama**
- ❖ **Types of radio drama**
- ❖ **The multi-plot nature of the serial**
- ❖ **Advantages of multiple plots in an Enter-Educate serial**
- ❖ **The structure of a radio serial episode**

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The Meaning of Drama

The English word "drama" derives from the Greek word *"dran"* meaning "to do." Thus, a drama is a **story** performed or "done" by actors on stage, radio, film, television, in an open field, or even on the street. A drama, like a story, recounts a chain of events and describes a web of relationships involving a person or persons. A drama can be true, but more often is fictional.

The major difference between a serial and other types of drama is duration. While a typical drama lasts one or two hours, a serial continues for weeks, months, or years. The story is presented in short episodes on a regular basis, usually once a week or once a day. The typical drama focuses on one major character and the chain of events and relationships in which he or she is involved. In contrast, a serial follows the lives and fortunes of several characters, showing how they relate to and affect one another. A writer must understand the classic structure and components of a typical drama to be able to weave the multiple stories of a serial together harmoniously.

Dramatic Conflict

Dramatic conflict is a vital feature of any drama, whether performed on stage, television, or radio, because it attracts and holds the attention of the audience. Dramatic conflict refers to the unusual, often unexpected, turns that occur in all human activities that create uncertainty, tension, suspense, or surprise. Every event, every circumstance, every relationship in life is subject to uncertainty. The most careful preparations can result, inadvertently, in disastrous errors or unanticipated benefits. Even well-intentioned people can make unwitting mistakes with amusing, tragic, or sometimes unimportant consequences. Individual people react differently—sometimes in unexpected ways—to the very same event. These twists and

turns and uncertainties constitute the dramatic conflict that creates much of a drama's appeal. Listeners stay tuned to a radio drama to find out how the tensions and the suspense will be resolved. A story without dramatic conflict is static, boring, and unattractive.

For example: Compare the following brief story outlines. Each focuses on the same character and tells a similar story. Version A, however, lacks dramatic conflict, while Version B uses dramatic conflict to increase the interest level and appeal of the story. Version B is far more likely than Version A to attract the interest and sustain the emotional involvement of the audience.

3

A. Outline of Story without Dramatic Conflict	B. Outline of Story with Dramatic Conflict

Marta is a midwife who lives in a rural village. She leads a very busy life. Much of her time is spent encouraging young couples to delay the births of their first children and to space later children appropriately.
 	
    Marta is an inspiration to all who know her, and she does a great deal of good for the community she serves.
 	
    The story follows Marta through several typical days as she advises and counsels various clients.
	Marta is a midwife who lives in a rural village. She leads a very busy life. Much of her work involves encouraging young couples to delay the births of their first children and to space later children appropriately.
	
	    In her private life, she is busy caring for a desperately ill husband and two teenage sons. At the same time, she is plagued by an old traditional healer who lives in the village; she believes that the ways of modern medicine are evil.
	
	    There are times when it seems that Marta will have to give up her work in spite of the pleas of the community members who need her and love her.
	
	    The story follows Marta through her joys and heartbreaks: the death of her husband, the eventual cooperation of the traditional healer, and the support she gains from her sons and her

Dramatic conflict follows one of three patterns:

1. **A person (or persons) against "fate"** or the unseen forces of life. This type of dramatic conflict is not suitable for Enter-Educate drama, which must assure audience members that they can take control of and improve their lives.

   Example A: A famous athlete is planning to take part in the Olympic Games and try for a gold medal. He practices hard and takes good care of himself in preparation for the contest. A month before the Games begin, he is riding home on the bus. A tire bursts, and the bus skids, crashes into a light pole, and overturns. The athlete's leg and hip are injured and he is taken to the hospital. It is clear that he will not be able to compete in the Olympics. He is depressed and angry at his bad luck but is determined to run again, declaring that he will not be defeated by a problem that was not of his own making.

2. **One person (or group of people) against another**.

   Example B: A young woman has a burning ambition to become a doctor. Her father can afford to send her to medical school, but he refuses to pay for her education. He believes that women should not pursue a profession but should devote their lives to the care of their husbands and children. The young woman must either obey her father's orders, find a way to persuade her father to change his mind, or run away from home and find a way to support herself.

3. **A person against himself or herself.** Many of the most difficult decisions that people make in life are those they must make alone on their own behalf. Choosing between two equally valid options can create a difficult dilemma—although it need not be tragic or world-shattering.

   Example C: A young mother, Glenda, has to decide whether to name her baby daughter Jessie, as she would like to do, or to name her Magda after her paternal grandmother. Glenda realizes that it is important to both her husband and her mother-in-law that the little girl be named for her grandmother. At the same time, Glenda—who was herself named after her mother's sister—knows how much she would have preferred to have a name that no one else in the family had. She would like her daughter to have a name of her own.

   The more emotionally charged the choice to be made by an individual, the more likely it is to attract and hold an audience. The dilemma described above, therefore, would not make good drama unless the mother faces dire consequences if she makes the wrong decision about naming her daughter.

   Dramatic conflict can cause the audience to be horrified, amused, or emotionally affected in some more moderate way. Indeed, the very same conflict can give rise to different reactions in the audience, depending on how it is handled in the drama. Consider the following story line, in which people confront a situation over which they have no control (people against fate).

Example D: A man and his wife plan a wonderful wedding anniversary party and invite all their friends. They are extremely anxious that everything will go well, so they spare no expense and they go over every detail a hundred times to make sure nothing will go wrong. Ten minutes before the guests are due to arrive, there is a sudden electricity blackout.

The response to this unexpected turn of events might be:

- **Tragic**, if, in the sudden darkness, the wife falls down the stairs and is killed.
- **Humorous**, if the husband, who has to finish dressing in the dark, puts on mismatched shoes and rubs toothpaste into his hair instead of hair oil.
- **Emotionally affecting**, if the party has to be canceled as a result of the sudden and prolonged blackout. The audience shares in the disappointment of the couple, who see their party ruined after their weeks of preparation and anticipation.

Dramatic conflict is influenced or even caused by the personalities of the characters involved. In Example A (above), the athlete's personality determined his response to the unfortunate accident, that is, whether or not he would continue to pursue his Olympic dream. In Example B, the father's personality led to his laying down the law for his daughter. Her personality, in turn, will determine how she responds to his treatment and will shape the outcome of the conflict between them. In Example C, the personalities of the mother, father, and grand mother may influence the decision made about the little girl's name. In Example D, the personalities of the husband and wife will influence their behavior during the electricity blackout.

Components of a Drama

Every story and every drama—whether it is a one-hour performance or a serial continuing for ten years—contains the same four components:

Characters: The people about whom the drama is created. (Sometimes, characters are animals or things, as in children's stories, folk tales, and fables.) Most stories revolve around one major character whose strongest personality trait—which may be positive, negative, or both—is responsible for or contributes to the dramatic conflict.

Plot: The chain of events or actions in which the characters are involved and during which the dramatic conflict develops.

Setting: The place(s) and time(s) during which the action takes place.

Theme: The emotional focus of the drama. The theme reflects a universal moral value or emotion that is understandable to all people at all times, such as truth, courage, love, fear, greed, or envy.

Enter-Educate dramas have a fifth component, which is not normally found in dramas designed purely for entertainment, that is:

Message: A *specific* message or lesson for the audience that is related to the theme. For example, a drama based on the universal theme of the joy of parenthood might also contain the health message that both fathers and mothers need to be alert to their children's health needs and even willing to forgo other activities in order to provide their children with proper care.

The Structure of a Drama

The plot of every story and, therefore, every drama, is built on the same five-part structure:

1. **Introduction**. The beginning of the drama, during which the major character appears perhaps along with one or two other characters, the plot (action) is initiated, the dramatic conflict is begun or hinted at, and the theme is foreshadowed.

2. **Development (with conflict)**. The main body of the drama, during which the plot advances and dramatic conflict develops.

3. **Climax.** The point where the dramatic conflict becomes so intense that something must happen to end it.

4. **Resolution or denouement**. The final portion of the plot, in which the dramatic conflict is resolved or the problem solved. The conflict may be resolved in an unpleasant manner, for example, by divorce, murder, war, or death. Alternatively, the conflict may be resolved amicably or even in an amusing way. In an Enter-Educate drama, a negative resolution demonstrates what can happen if the pro-social message is ignored; a positive resolution shows the rewards of a message learned and practiced.

5. **Conclusion**. The ending, during which the loose ends of the story are tied up, either by the writer or the audience. Some cultures enjoy "dilemma tales," in which the action stops just before the conclusion to allow audience members to fill in the ending for themselves. In an Enter-Educate drama, the resolution and conclusion underscore the relevance of the message to the listening audience.

The following short story—one of Aesop's fables—illustrates the five-part structure of a story. It provides a good example for Enter-Educate writers, because fables traditionally contain an educational message as well as the other four components of a story. Later script samples in this book demonstrate how this story structure is maintained even when a more complex social message is added.

EXAMPLE

Bundle of Sticks

Introduction

A wise farmer was greatly distressed because his three sons were always quarreling with one another. He tried in vain to reconcile them by pointing out how foolish they were.

Development

Then one day the farmer called his sons to his room. Before him lay a heap of sticks that he had tied together in a bundle. Each son in turn was told to take up the bundle and break it in two. They all tried, each son trying to outsmart the other, but all the sons tried in vain.

Climax

When the sons finally gave up, the farmer untied the bundle and gave his sons the sticks to break one by one. This, of course, they did easily.

Resolution and Conclusion

 Then the father said, "My sons, by this test you can see that as long as you remain united, you are strong enough to resist all your enemies. Once you quarrel and become separated, then you are destroyed."

Moral: Unity is strength.

Introduction: The characters are introduced, and the personality of the main character is established. The setting is indicated by the work of the main character. The plot and dramatic conflict are established. The theme is foreshadowed.

Development: The conflict among the sons continues. The foolishness of the sons is now also in "conflict" with the wisdom of the father.

Climax: The conflict comes to a head and is resolved by the father's wisdom.

Resolution and conclusion: The conflict among the sons is resolved, and the message is made clear to the sons and to the audience.

This story was presented in **narrative** form, with the narrator telling the characters' tale for them. In drama, the characters tell—or reveal—their own story. The following pages present a dramatized version of the same fable, showing how, in drama, everything must be revealed through what the characters say and by some occasional, appropriate sound effects. A study of the two versions of the fable will show how dialogue is used to reveal in the drama all the details that are given by the narrator in the story.

Notes on Script Presentation

There are certain accepted methods of presenting or writing down scripts that make production easier. In sample scripts in this book, the following conventions are used:

FX = Sound effect
FADE AND HOLD UNDER = Turn the volume of the music down, but keep it just audible under the narrator.
FADE AND CUT = Turn down the volume of the music gradually and then cut it completely.
UNDERLINING = All activities handled by the technician rather than the actors, such as music and sound effects, are underlined.
LINE NUMBERING = Each speech is numbered so that it is easy for the director to refer to a particular place in the script.
   More information on script presentation can be found in Chapter 11.

Fables of Our Time	Page 1 of 2
Episode #10: The Bundle of Sticks	Draft: Final
Writer: Aesop/Hall	Date: January 16, 1995

1. FX. FARM ANIMAL NOISES IN BACKGROUND, COWS, CHICKENS, ETC. MIX WITH

2. FX. THREE TEENAGE BOYS QUARRELING.

3. SONS: (QUARRELING AD LIB) I did not! You always do! It's all your fault. Well, if you weren't so stupid, it wouldn't... Are you calling me stupid? Just you wait!

4. FARMER: (CALLING LOUDLY) Boys... boys.... Stop that quarreling. How can we ever get any work done on our farm with the three of you arguing all day long?

5. SON 1: But it's all his fault.

6. SON 2: It is not! They started it!

7. SON 3: No...I'm the one who's been trying to stop it.

8. FARMER: It's not important who started it and who tried to stop it. I just don't want to hear the three of you quarreling like this again. Arguing is a foolish waste of time. It is not the behavior of wise folk. Now come along... (Going Off) Let's get on with our tasks.

9. MUSIC. BRIEF SCENE CHANGE THEME. CUT.

10. SONS: (Quarreling Ad Lib). I did not!
        You always do!
        It's all your fault.
        Well, if you weren't so stupid, it wouldn't... Are you calling me stupid? Just you wait!

11. FARMER: (LOUDLY INSISTENT) All right. That's enough. Come with me, all three of you. (GOING OFF) I want to show you something.

12. SON 1: (FOLLOWING) Where are we going?

13. SON 2: (FOLLOWING) I don't know. We'll have to follow him and see.

14. FARMER: (COMING IN) Come in here to my room...all of you. What do you see on the floor in front of you?

Introduction:
*The central **characters** and their personality traits are introduced. The **plot** and **dramatic conflict** begin. The **theme** is foreshadowed.*

Development:
*The **conflict** continues.*

*The conflict comes to a **climax** where something must be done to end it.*

Fables of Our Time		Page 2 of 2
Episode #10: The Bundle of Sticks		Draft: Final
Writer: Aesop/Hall		Date: January 16, 1995

15. SON 3:	(CONFUSED) A bundle of sticks.	
16. FARMER:	Exactly! A bundle of simple sticks. Now I want to see if any one of you can pick up that simple bundle of sticks and break it in two.	
17. SON 1:	Easy! Any fool can break those little old sticks. Watch me, Father, I can do it.	
18. FX. CLATTER OF STICKS BEING MOVED.		
19. SON 1:	(Grunting) Uh…it's not…so easy…Uhh!	
20. SON 2:	Don't be so stupid. Anyone can break those sticks. Come on, let me do it. I'll show you I'm the strongest. Father…	
21 FX. CLATTER OF STICKS BEING MOVED.		
22. SON 2:	(GRUNTING) What's…the matter..with these…stupid sticks? They should break easily…Uhh!	
23. SON 3:	Just pass them over here to a really strong man. You'll see how easy the job is. Obviously, Father, I am stronger than the others.	
24. FX. CLATTER OF STICKS BEING MOVED.		
25. SON 3:	(GRUNTING) What have you done to them..you two? You put..stones in them...otherwise, I could break them easily…Uhh!	
26. FARMER: All right, my sons. Stop…all of you. Put the bundle of sticks on the floor.		
27. FX. CLATTER OF STICKS BEING DROPPED ON FLOOR.		***Resolution and Conclusion:***
28. FARMER:	Now then, let me untie the bundle.	*The conflict is resolved through the personality of the farmer (his wisdom).*
29. FX. CLATTER OF STICKS BEING UNTIED AND DROPPED.		
30. FARMER:	Here, I will give you one stick each…one for you…one for you…and one for you. Now then, each of you, break the stick you are holding.	
31. FX. THREE SEPARATE STICK SNAPS.		
32. FARMER:	And so, my sons, by this test you can see that as long as you remain united, you are strong enough to resist all enemies. Once you quarrel and become separated, you are vulnerable and can be destroyed.	*The lesson (**message**) is understood by the characters and by the audience.*

3

Characters, structure, and dialogue are considerably more complex in an Enter-Educate drama than in this short fable, but the fable demonstrates simply and clearly the building blocks of every story whether told in narrative or dramatic form.

Types of Radio Drama

Radio drama can be presented in three different styles: as an independent drama, as a series, or as a serial.

The **independent drama** can be likened to a short story, Like the dramatized fable above, it tells the complete story in one broadcast, usually lasting no longer than one hour. It can be shorter, as short as five minutes, for example, when the drama is broadcast as a brief segment on a thirty-minute radio magazine program.

The **drama series** is a collection of **independent dramas** that use the same major characters in each program. For example, the characters of the father and his three sons from the fable above could appear in further programs, with each program telling a different story, underscoring a different theme, and teaching a different message. Extra characters might appear in the other stories, and some might appear in more than one story, but none would appear as regularly as the farmer and his sons. Each drama in the series would be completed in one program. Some of the program titles for such a series might be:

- The Farmer and his Sons and the Plague of Rats
- The Farmer and his Sons Build a Big Barn
- The Farmer and his Sons and the Terrifying Bandits

A **situation comedy**, also frequently termed a "sit com," is a series that is intended to be amusing or, at least, to have a happy ending. Situation comedies are now more frequent on television than on radio and tend to be popular with the audience—even when they make use of exaggerated or far-fetched plots.

The **serial** is an ongoing story that continues from one broadcast to another. Each episode is open-ended, and the story is picked up and continued in the next episode. A serial can be likened to a novel, where the story is divided into chapters, with each chapter leading into the next. A serial may be as short as six 15-minute episodes, aired weekly, or it can continue on a daily basis for decades without end. A continuing drama that is presented in fewer than six episodes is usually referred to as a mini-series or "two-" or "three-part" drama.

If the fable of "The Bundle of Sticks" were to be made into a serial, the story would not end where it does. Rather, it would continue into more episodes with other characters and other plots introduced to enrich the story. For example, one son might find it impossible to do as his father suggested and take himself off to the city to set up a business of his own, where he could work independently. The other two sons might work happily together until they both marry and discover that their wives do not get along. Thus, the story could continue for a long time, following the various adventures of the brothers and their wives.

The Multi-Plot Nature of a Serial

The serial is the drama format that most reflects real life, because it "constructs the feeling that the lives of the characters go on during our absence" (Ang, 1985). Serial drama, therefore, can be most effective as a means of reaching and affecting a wide audience with a story that has all the appearances of reality, while being fiction. The versatility of the serial lies in its multi-plot structure. Several stories are woven together: a central story (the **main plot**) and several additional stories (**sub-plots**). A serial that runs for 52 episodes typically has three or four sub-plots accompanying the main plot. Each plot has its own characters and its own dramatic conflict, climax, and resolution, but all the plots are interrelated in some way. Frequently, a serial, like a series, has a central uniting character who connects the various plots without having a strong, separate plot of his or her own. (Further information on the central uniting character is contained in Chapter 5.)

> The following plot treatment, of a serial entitled *Too Late, Too Bad*, includes a main plot and three sub-plots. The treatment shows how each of the plots is separate, yet connected with all the others, and how the central uniting character, Dr. Peter Moss, helps tie the plots together. The treatment also shows how the message is brought in as part of the lives of the various characters; it is not the central or only event of importance to them.

EXAMPLE

Plot Treatment For *Too Late, Too Bad*
(Central Uniting Character: Dr. Peter Moss)

Main Plot
Major Characters:

Steven Stan, a wealthy man who lives in Sunville. His family has been feuding for years with the Twigg family over which is the wealthier and more influential family in the district. There is constant friction between the two families. Their hatred of one another is often revealed in their conversations with the local doctor, Dr. Peter Moss, who is the family physician for both families.

Conflict comes to a head when Brian Twigg (25) announces that he is going to marry Patty Stan (27). The Twiggs believe Brian is too young to marry and that he has more education and more training to complete before taking on the responsibilities of marriage. They blame the Stan family for encouraging Patty to seduce their son, Brian, just to get their hands on the Twigg wealth.

Shortly before the wedding date, the Stan mansion burns to the ground. Several people are injured, including some fire fighters and Patty Stan, who is badly burned.

Dr. Moss and his nurse, Jane, are called to a nearby house to assist with those who have been injured in the fire, or who are suffering from smoke inhalation.

Sub-Plot A
Major Characters:

Carla and George Brown, a young couple who have moved recently to Sunville. They are expecting twins. George is a builder and is trying to get started in his own business. He is having trouble finding work, and things are very hard for the young couple. Mr. Stan has told George several times that he will have some work for him "soon" but these promises so far have come to nothing.

Because of the financial difficulties she and George are having, Carla seriously considers having an abortion. Dr. Moss persuades her against this, and although her pregnancy is difficult, she eventually begins to look forward to her children. George does, too, although he is increasingly concerned about how he will support his family.

Carla unexpectedly goes into labor on the night of the mansion fire. George cannot locate Dr. Moss so he rushes Carla to the hospital, afraid that she might lose the babies—and even her own life.

Sub-Plot B
Major Characters:

Hedda and Harry Jones. They live several hundred kilometers from Sunville. Hedda is a home-visit nurse, who devotes a lot of her spare time to helping young people understand sexuality and family planning. Harry is a dreamer and schemer who has no real profession, but who has a strong ambition to make a lot of money in a hurry. He is a distant relative of the Stan family, so he decides to borrow money from them to start a business. He and Hedda come to Sunville to request a loan.

Hedda visits Dr. Moss to find out how she can volunteer to help young people in the Sunville area. At his request, she goes one night to the local hospital to visit a young pregnant girl who is afraid she might have HIV/AIDS.

Harry, meantime, goes to the local bar and, after a few drinks, starts boasting to the strangers around him about his wealthy relatives and their house full of rich goods. One of the strangers in the bar is a thief who decides to enhance his own wealth through a visit to the Stan mansion. It is he who sets fire to the house as he is trying to rob it.

Sub-Plot C
Major Characters:

Mr. and Mrs. Jadd who work for the Stan family, she in the kitchen and he in the garden. They are uneducated and had more children than they could afford before they learned about family planning. They have four surviving children. Several others died in infancy because the Jadds did not know how to care for them. Mr. and Mrs. Jadd are working hard to provide for their surviving children and are encouraging them to plan and provide for their own futures.

The Stan family has promised to pay for the university education for the Jadds' eldest son, Bob, who is a hard-working student. He wants to become an obstetrician. Because of what his mother suffered with so many children, Bob wants to work with the community on improving maternal and child health conditions in the area. Taking him with him Dr. Moss encourages Bob's activities, even when he goes to visit patients in their homes. Because of this habit, Bob has come to know George and Carla quite well. He overhears George one day, suggesting to Carla that if he doesn't find work soon,

Plot Treatment for *"Too Late Too Bad"*, **cont'd.**

Main Plot cont'd.

During his examination of Patty, Dr. Moss discovers that she is pregnant and is threatened with a miscarriage as a result of her injuries in the fire.

Sub-Plot B cont'd.

When Harry returns from the bar—quite drunk—he banishes Hedda from the house, believing that she must have contracted the AIDS virus while visiting the hospital, and that she will infect him if she so much as breathes on him.

Hedda turns to Dr. Moss for advice on how to assure Harry that neither she nor he is in any danger of contracting AIDS as a result of her visit to the hospital.

Sub-Plot C cont'd.

he will have to do something drastic to create a need for his services.

When the Stan home burns down, the Jadds are left wondering if this will make a difference to the family's promise of assistance to Bob. They wonder about asking Dr. Moss whether he can help if the Stan offer falls through.

3

Advantages of Multiple Plots in an Enter-Educate Serial

The treatment of *Too Late, Too Bad* shows how the various plots in a serial fit together and demonstrates some of the advantages of the multiple-plot approach in dramas used to promote social development. These include the following:

- The serial **can appeal to a wider range** of audience members. While the characters involved in one plot may appeal only to some audience members, characters from another plot, who have quite a different lifestyle, may attract others.

- **Suspense can be maintained** throughout all the episodes. The writer can move from one plot—and its mix of conflict and crisis—to another, in the process keeping the audience in a constant state of excitement and maintaining their emotional involvement.

- The **story is enriched** by the wider range of characters, and the action becomes more complex as the sub-plots weave in and out. The ability to suspend one or more plots for a time also helps to enrich the story and, at the same time, prevents a frequent problem of Enter-Educate serials: the suggestion that everything in life follows a predictable course and works out neatly in the end.

- A serial can be more **emotionally powerful** than a single-plot story, because multiple plots allow for a wider variety of people, interacting in very different ways, and expressing both positive and negative emotions. Since emotional involvement is what most attracts and holds listeners, multiple plots increase the chances of attracting and holding a wide audience.

- Message **relevance** can be shown **through a variety of characters**. It is clear that "people cannot learn much...unless they attend to, and accurately perceive, the relevant aspects of modeled activities" (Bandura, 1986). If only one set of characters communicates the social message of a drama, listeners may believe that the message applies only to people in those circumstances. Sub-plots show, subtly and naturally, that the message is relevant to a variety of people in differing situations.

- The **message can be repeated** easily and unobtrusively. It can be incorporated into several different plots, presented in a number of different ways, and viewed from different angles.

- Multiple plots provide a greater opportunity for **message relief**. The message can be set aside briefly in one or more of the plots while other elements that enrich the story are developed.

- The various **Steps to Behavior Change** (see Prologue) can be demonstrated naturally in different plots. The characters in one plot, for example, may be at an early stage in the process, just becoming aware of the need for behavior change. Those in a second plot may be at the point of deciding to take action. Still other characters in a third plot may have adopted the new behavior already and begun advocating it to other family and community members.

The Structure of a Radio Serial Episode

Each program in a serial is called an **episode**, and episodes of all serials are structured in a similar way, whether they are created purely for entertainment or for education as well. The typical structure of an episode is:

1. **Signature (or theme) tune**. The first sound the audience hears when tuning in to a radio serial is music: the signature or theme tune. This alerts listeners that today's episode is about to start and gives them a few seconds to prepare themselves for the listening experience.

    The signature tune serves another important function in places where the radio signal is not always clear. It gives listeners a little time in which to tune the radio correctly so that the actors' voices come through clearly when the drama begins.

2. **Standard opening**. When the serial is sponsored by a government ministry, outside sponsor, or other organization(s), it is useful to air a standard opening immediately after the theme music.

> ## Radio Serial Episode Structure
>
> 1. Signature tune
> 2. Standard opening
> 3. Recap of previous episode
> 4. Three or four separate scenes
> 5. Closing comments
> 6. Signature tune
> 7. Closing announcements
> 8. Repeat of signature tune

3

EXAMPLE

ANNOUNCER: The Ministry of Health in association with Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services presents *A Better Life,* the story of a village community striving to bring a better life to all its members.

The standard opening is usually read by the station **announcer** (also known as the continuity announcer) at the start of each episode. Alternatively, it can be pre-recorded and copied on to the beginning of each episode during recording.

3. **Brief recap of the previous episode**. It is common practice at the start of each episode to remind listeners what happened in the previous episode. This recapitulation should be done as briefly as possible, so that the action of the new episode can begin right away.

EXAMPLE

1.   MUSIC. SIGNATURE MUSIC :10. FADE UNDER ANNOUNCER .

2.   ANNOUNCER: The Family Planning Division of the Ministry of Health, in association with the Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services, presents *A New Tomorrow*.

3.   MUSIC. SIGNATURE MUSIC. UP :05 FADE UNDER NARRATOR.

4. NARRATOR: In our last episode, Tom stormed out of his home in anger because his mother-in-law had criticized him for spending so much money on alcohol. His wife, Judy, is left alone with three small children and a furious mother.

5. <u>MUSIC. SIG. MUSIC UP:05. CROSS FADE TO FX.</u>

6. <u>FX. CHILDREN CRYING IN BACKGROUND.</u>

7. MOTHER: (SHOUTING) And if you'd listened to me before you married that idiot, this would never have happened...

8. JUDY: (PLEADING) Mother, please...the children...

9. MOTHER: (INTERRUPTING) Don't you "Please" me, young lady. You should listen to me.

The recap usually is not read by the station announcer, but rather by a **narrator** whose voice opens and closes each episode of the serial. (More information on the use of a narrator in serial drama can be found in Chapter 5.)

4. **Three or four scenes**. To keep the serial active and exciting, the scene should change at least three times in each 15- to 20-minute episode. This is easily done if various plots have been mapped out in advance and outlined in a full treatment. The treatment is written and approved before any script writing begins. (Information on developing plots can be found in Chapter 4.)

5. **Closing comments from narrator**. Typically, the narrator makes a closing comment about the story and invites the listeners to tune in next time. The narrator's closing comments should be kept brief so that the audience is left on the note of suspense with which the episode concluded.

EXAMPLE

NARRATOR: And so ends today's episode of *Happily Ever After*. Be sure to tune in at the same time next Thursday to find out if Marta will ever see her baby again.

Occasionally, it is the narrator who provides this suspense as can be seen at the end of the episode of *Life in Hopeful Village* presented in Chapter 12.

6. **Signature tune**. After the narrator's final words, the signature tune is played to signal the end of the episode.

7. **Closing announcements**. The station announcer ends the program with a brief standard announcement similar to the one that opened the program. The announcer also may tell listeners how to obtain support materials, encourage them to write the radio station, or take other actions related to the program.

EXAMPLE

14. ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to another episode of *A Better Life*, brought to you by the Ministry of Health in association with Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services. We remind you that an information brochure about family planning services can be obtained by writing to the program. Our address is: A Better Life, P.O. Box 679, Xtown.

Remember to listen next Wednesday at this same time—7:30 p.m.—for the next exciting episode of *A Better Life*.

15. MUSIC. SIG. MUSIC TO END.

If the same information is given each time, the closing announcement can be pre-recorded and added to the tape of each episode. If the drama is part of a longer program, such as a magazine or a distance education program, the closing announcements may not come immediately following the drama, but at the end of the entire program.

8. **Brief repeat of signature tune**. The whole program ends with another five to ten seconds of signature music. If the episode runs short, the music can be extended.

Some writers like to give each episode in the serial a title as well as a program number. This practice encourages the writer to give each episode a clear, strong focus.

Chapter Summary

- Drama is the doing or performance of a story that recounts a chain of events, a web of relationships, and a series of emotions that involve one or more people.

- Dramatic conflict is a vital feature of all drama because it captivates the audience.

- Dramatic conflict refers to the unusual, often unexpected, turns that may occur in all human activities that create uncertainty, tension, suspense, or surprise.

- There are three main forms of dramatic conflict: a person against fate, a person against another person or group of people, and a person in conflict with herself or himself.

- All dramas contain four components: characters, plot, setting, and theme.

- Drama used for social development includes a fifth component, the message, which must be blended into the story naturally, subtly, and gradually.

- All dramas follow a five-part structure: introduction, development, climax, resolution, and conclusion.

- The three types of drama commonly used on radio and television are independent dramas, series (including situation comedies), and serials.

- The serial is unique because it presents a story in multiple episodes over a period of weeks, months, or years, and because it contains several plots developing side by side, with each episode ending on a note of suspense.

- The multi-plot structure of the serial has many advantages for pro-social drama: It appeals to a wider audience, maintains suspense, varies the emotional appeal, is relevant to various audiences, allows for message repetition, provides message relief, and presents multiple Steps to Behavior Change.

- Radio serial episodes all follow much the same standard format:

  1. Opening signature or theme music;
  2. Standard opening;
  3. Recapitulation of previous story action;
  4. Three to four scenes including at least two different plots;
  5. Closing signature tune;
  6. Closing comments from narrator;
  7. Standard closing announcement; and
  8. Brief repeat of signature tune.

- Some writers give each episode a title to ensure that it has a clear focus.

Chapter Four

Blending Story and Message in The Drama Plot
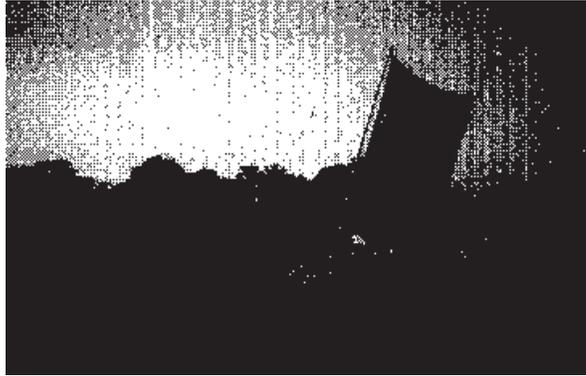
To be credible, the drama must reflect the environment and lifestyle of the audience for whom it is written.

Learning Objectives

■ To appreciate the ten aims of plot development.

■ To recognize the importance of blending the message into the story naturally, subtly, and gradually.

■ To appreciate the value of avoiding clichéd plots and to know how to ensure plot originality.

■ To understand and be able to apply the steps needed to develop plots that can carry the message appropriately.

■ To recognize the importance of plot consistency.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, review the plots you devised for the exercise in Chapter 3, checking them against the ten aims of plot development listed in this chapter. Make adjustments as necessary. Ensure that the story you are developing is original and is suited to the audience for which it is created.

Prepare an event list to ensure that all vital parts of the message will be covered in the serial. Determine which events will be covered by each of the plots.

Draft a full treatment of the main plot in accordance with the plot guidelines in this chapter. Make sure the story incorporates the message naturally, subtly and gradually.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The ten aims of plot development**

❖ **Combining message and story in an Enter-Educate plot**

❖ **Creating original plots**

❖ **Steps in plot development**

❖ **Guidelines for plot development**

Ten Aims of Plot Development

A successful Enter-Educate drama depends on a strong plot that fulfills the following ten aims:

1. **Create an emotional experience**. Emotional involvement in a drama allows listeners to live out their own hopes and fears vicariously. Most adults do not freely give vent to their emotions, but keep them bottled up inside. Characters in dramas can express strong emotions "on behalf of" audience members, who then experience an emotional release or catharsis. It is this emotional experience that makes drama so powerful. The added advantage of serial drama is that the characters in its multiple, ongoing plots can demonstrate realistic ways for listeners to achieve personal—not just vicarious—relief from their own problems.

2. **Tell a people story**. People are interested in other people. Dramatic details about the tragedies and triumphs in the lives of other people, who are just like themselves, will always attract listeners. It is people, not messages, who make drama. Serial dramas must focus on the characters who demonstrate the message as they go about their daily lives. In the episode of *Life in Hopeful Village* presented in Chapter 12 (page 170), for example, the audience pays attention to the serial's message on literacy, because they are gripped by the story of what happens to Littlejohn as a result of his inability to read and write.

3. **Work within the culture**. The drama should reflect the customs of the audience for which it is intended. In some cultures, for example, young

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Ten Aims of Plot Development

1. Create an **emotional experience**.
2. Tell a **people story**.
3. Work within the **culture**.
4. Convey **ideas** rather than words.
5. **Show** rather than tell.
6. Use **humor**.
7. Motivate **positive** change.
8. Create **trust**.
9. Encourage **advocacy**.
10. Be **original**.

The first seven aims come from "Strategies for Improving A Treatment" in *Script Writing for High Impact Videos* by John Morley, and they are useful for all drama writers. The final three are added for Enter-Educate writers.

people customarily address their elders with terms of respect rather than their names; elsewhere, names are used. In some cultures, people always remove their shoes before entering a house or they offer tea to visitors. Other cultures emphasize praying before undertaking any new venture. Nearly all cultures have traditional holidays or days of celebration that are observed in special ways.

Including colloquial expressions also enhances the drama's attraction for listeners. The writer should become aware of religious expressions, proverbs, fables and other colloquial expressions that are widely known and commonly used by the community. (Further information on the use of language is included in Chapter 7.)

It is difficult to transplant a social development drama—in its original form—from one culture to another. Even in cultures that seem similar on the surface, there are subtle differences which must be acknowledged and reflected if a serial is to be effective as a model for behavioral change. Throughout a serial, the writer must acknowledge the local culture and make use of its habits and idiosyncrasies. It is here that the audience profile and the writer's personal knowledge of the audience become so important.

4. **Convey ideas rather than words**. The reason for using drama rather than a lecture format is to get away from didactic words. Because it is the medium of the imagination, radio is an ideal instrument for conveying ideas—as long as the writer conveys these ideas through the lives and conversations of realistic characters, not through didactic speeches.

5. **Show rather than tell**. A major strength of the dramatic serial is its ability to demonstrate what life is like when new attitudes and practices are adopted. In learning situations, demonstration is always more effective than talk. The writer should create characters who can act as role models for listeners by demonstrating a growing understanding of the new ideas presented and by showing listeners how to adopt desired behaviors. One strong role model is worth a thousand words of instruction.

6. **Use humor**. Everybody enjoys a touch of humor in life. While a story need not be uproariously funny all or even part of the time, it helps to have occasional amusing scenes. Some writers find it useful to create a comic who has a great sense of humor or is frequently involved in funny situations. An important rule, however, is do not deliver a serious message through the words of a comic character. Since listeners are accustomed to laughing at comic characters, they are not likely to take the words of comics seriously when they deliver a valuable educational message. Humor differs markedly from culture to culture, so the writer must know and appreciate the types of situations and characters that the intended audience finds amusing.

7. **Be positive**. While a drama may include difficult, even nasty, characters who are opposed to new ways, the overall thrust of the story

should be positive. It is difficult, if not impossible, to educate people by telling them only what they should not do. Sometimes, even mentioning the negative side of a situation reinforces—however inadvertently—the very behavior that the story is aiming to replace. Telling listeners not to believe a rumor that vasectomy causes impotence, for example, may plant the notion even more firmly in their minds. (The section on "Social Learning Theory" in the Prologue discusses the greater effectiveness of positive, rather than negative, models.)

8. **Create trust**. Creating trust in the listening audience is critical to bringing about social change through radio drama. Listeners must have confidence in the story and in the message. (The section on "Persuasion Theory" in the Prologue discusses the importance of credible sources for influencing an audience.) To give the drama a sense of authority, role model characters should resemble closely the type of people whom listeners respect in their community. Trust is further enhanced by presenting accurate, appropriate, and consistent information. This can be assured by constant use of the Writer's Brief, which contains the precise message information to be included in the drama as well as definitions of key words and phrases.

9. **Encourage advocacy**. Even though a radio serial can reach many people in a community, it alone is not sufficient to "spread the word." By involving the listeners emotionally, however, the serial can motivate them to pass on what they hear to their families and friends. The writer can encourage this by demonstrating through role models in the serial how listeners who already have adopted the desired behavior can help others understand the new ways and change their behavior. (The section on "Diffusion Theory" in the Prologue discusses the spread of information throughout a community by word of mouth.)

10. **Be original**. The writer should try to avoid a stereotyped story that follows a predictable pattern, even when dealing with a problem that results from a known and finite set of causes, such as AIDS. The typical drama dealing with AIDS, for example, features a young man who behaves irresponsibly in the belief that he could not possibly contract the disease. Inevitably he succumbs to the disease, and all the "good" characters learn from his demise. An alternative approach might be to focus on an AIDS victim who is not all "bad." Although he may have contracted AIDS from promiscuous, unprotected sex, he might have improved a friend's life—not by warning him against AIDS, but, for example, by bequeathing the friend a bicycle that allows him to earn a living as a messenger. This differentiates the story from others on the same topic and gives it a positive thrust despite the tragic situation.

    The multi-plot nature of the serial gives the writer the opportunity to fulfill all ten aims of plot development. While no single plot will achieve every aim, the combination of the main plot and various sub-plots can encompass all ten aims comfortably and create a foundation for a successful blending of plot and message.

Combining Message and Story in an Enter-Educate Plot

The success of a radio serial for development purposes depends more on creating an exciting, emotional story than on the repeated presentation of didactic messages. At the same time, the message is of paramount importance. Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the writer is successfully blending the message with the story. From the outset, writers should have a perfectly clear understanding of the vital points of message information that are listed in the box. (They are explained in detail in Chapter 2.) Writers should keep these points in mind throughout all stages of plot and scene development. They should not force them into the story at the last moment.

A well-constructed story is a good story anywhere in the world. Even though particular cultural references may not be understood everywhere, a well-constructed story will be enjoyed universally.

There are no hard and fast rules about how plot development should begin. Different writers work in different ways. Before scripting commences, however, the writer must clearly define how the story will develop from the first to the last episode. This must be stated in a full narrative treatment or synopsis that shows how each plot will develop, how the plots will interrelate, and which parts of the message will be expressed through each plot. At the same time, it is important that the story is fresh and new and does not simply repeat a message that the audience has already heard.

Creating Original Plots

Finding a way to make a message new and compelling presents a special challenge when the topic has already been addressed on radio and in other media. The detailed message content will influence the writer's choice of conflicts, but relying on message content alone tends to result in clichéd stories that may bore the audience and dissuade them from listening. Family planning messages, for instance, typically suggest a story that contains the following situations:

- A wife is intimidated by her husband, who abuses her because she has not given him a son;

- The old-fashioned in-laws support their son's behavior;

- The young heroine nearly dies because she has become pregnant at too young an age;

Vital Points of Message Information

The writer should have a clear understanding of:

1. The changes the overall radio project hopes to achieve in audience behavior and social norms (measurable objectives).

2. The approach to be taken to assist the audience to reach these goals (purpose).

3. The life style of the audience and their current attitudes and practices with regard to the new behavior.

4. The overall message of the radio serial.

5. The theme or emotional focus of the serial.

6. The scope and sequence of the message.

7. Glossary definitions to be used for specific technical terms.

4

- The family suffers economic hardship because they have too many children; and

- A wise counselor and advocate, often a school teacher, works hard to persuade people to listen to the health worker's advice on family planning.

While all these events do occur commonly, the writer needs to find ways to make each serial new and fresh—even when it communicates message and events that have been covered by other writers in other times and places. The following guidelines can be useful in avoiding clichéd stories.

Guidelines for Creating Original Stories

1. **Base the plot, characters, and conflict of the drama on the realities of the audience members' lives**. Visit and find out what problems of real and lasting concern currently exist in the listeners' community. Use one of these problems as the main plot of the serial, even if it is unrelated to the behavior the project is addressing. The message can be brought in just as successfully through the sub-plots as in the main plot. Basing the main plot on whatever problem is currently of greatest concern to the audience will attract and hold the listeners' attention.

   Find out what types of stories and characters the audience enjoys. Observe which types of people community members admire and which types they dislike. Discover what type of humor appeals to them, which behaviors they find amusing, and which people they like to copy. Base the drama's characters on these types.

   Examine the audience's physical environment closely. Consider whether something in this environment could give rise to a crisis and dramatic climax instead of relying on the message to provide the conflict. The story, for example, could revolve around a young couple who are expecting their first child. While the pregnancy has gone well, there is a raging rainstorm on the day the mother goes into labor. The river breaks its banks, making it unlikely that the health worker will be able to reach the young mother to attend the birth. The event of the birth can be used to teach important lessons about pre- and post-natal care, but the crisis and climax of the story do not rely on the stereotypical event of something going wrong with the birth itself.

2. **Create characters who have lives outside the topic being addressed by the serial**. If the central uniting character is a female health worker, for example, the story should not show her only in the health clinic and in conversation with her clients. She also should have a private life—perhaps with a husband and children—and personal problems with which the audience can sympathize.

> ### Guidelines for Creating Original Stories
>
> 1. Base the drama on the realities of the audience members' lives, including:
>   - their current problems,
>   - stories and characters they like, and
>   - their physical environment.
> 2. Create realistic characters who have lives outside the message.
> 3. Include unexpected twists in the plots.
> 4. Be creative and original in developing plots.

3. **Create unusual or unexpected twists in the plots**. To make the drama more exciting, first lead listeners in one direction and then change direction. In *Too Late, Too Bad,* for example, initially it seemed that George might have been responsible for the fire in the Stan mansion. After all, he did complain to Carla that if he could not find a job, he would have to do something drastic to create work for himself. The plot changed direction, however, when it was discovered that Harry's boasting at the bar had been indirectly responsible for the fire.

4. **Be creative and original**. Think about the stereotypical approach to the topic, and then use imagination to think of some other, original—but appropriate—ways to deliver the message. Test new and unusual ideas before using them in the serial by creating a few pilot scripts and inviting members of the chosen audience to listen to them and comment. It is not necessary to produce these test episodes on audio tape; they can be presented quite effectively in a reading. (Some suggestions for pilot testing story ideas are given in Chapter 10.)

Plot Development Guidelines

1. **Prepare an Event List**. Plot development is greatly enhanced by the preparation of an event list, and many writers prefer to begin plot development with this step. The event list is a listing of activities or happenings that could occur in the story and allow for various aspects of the message to be covered naturally.

   For example: In a project that has a central message of encouraging parents to use car seats and seat belts when their children travel by car, the writer might prepare an event list like this:

   - grandparents giving gift of car seat to parents of first grandchild;
   - accident in which child without seat belt is hurt;
   - policeman fining a motorist for not using seat belt with child;
   - accident in which serious harm is avoided because baby is in car seat; and
   - parent-teacher meeting in which teacher stresses value of car seats and belts.

   Then, while developing the story, the writer could choose which of these events could come into the story naturally; perhaps all of them could be used in the various plots of the story.

   The event list for a drama serial with a more complex message, such as *Grains of Sand in the Sea* might be like this:

   - the wedding of a young couple;

4

Steps in Plot Development

1. Start with an exciting, locally appropriate story.
2. Put together the event list.
3. Draft the treatment of the main plot, including the message to be included and the underlying theme.
4. Draft the treatment of each sub-plot, including the message to be included and the underlying theme.
5. Check that the message is spread among the plots naturally, subtly, and gradually.
6. Determine the central uniting character.
7. Combine all the treatments into the full serial treatment.

- a family taking out a small government-sponsored loan in order to start their own business;

- the near failure of a small business;

- a young couple making the decision—against traditional beliefs—to delay the birth of their first child;

- a family installing a tile floor in their home as a sign of their new prosperity;

- a miscarriage;

- a couple seeking advice about side effects of a contraceptive method;

- a family celebrating their ability to buy new clothes for the first time in many years; and

- a midwife in heated disagreement with the senior health worker in the village.

A close examination of that list indicates that one plot—over the course of 52 episodes—could cover (a) and (b). Another plot could cover (c) and (d). A third plot (perhaps the main plot) could involve the strong male community member (g) and the headstrong one (f). The midwife could be the central uniting character who would appear in and link all the plots.

An event list like this assists the writer to determine:
- how much of the message will be covered by the main plot;
- how many sub-plots will be needed;
- what part of the message will be covered by the main plot and how much by each sub-plot;
- the major character(s) required for each plot, and the dominant personality characteristics of each of the major characters;
- the central dramatic conflict of each plot;
- the predominant theme or emotion for each plot;
- the time that will elapse in the overall story between the first and the last episodes.

The order in which the events occur usually is determined by the scope and sequence listed in the Writer's Brief.

2. **Think up a story that is likely to appeal to the chosen audience** and be exciting and enjoyable to write, and then see how the various events that can display the message can blend into it naturally. This approach generally works better than trying to concoct a story around the message, forcing the characters and actions into place.

For example: For the Indonesian serial, *Grains of Sand in the Sea*, the writer began with the idea of a young man determined that he was not going to live the poverty-stricken life that his parents had led. He runs away from his village and the girl he hopes to marry in order to seek his fortune in the big city. Throughout the serial, the young man experiences many adventures: some frightening, some dangerous, some amusing, and some rewarding. This story idea appealed to the writer because it

provided opportunity for a wide range of activities and emotions and because it was the type of adventure story that was very popular with his audience.

Another advantage of this plot was that it was easy for the writer to see how sub-plots could be developed to accompany it:

- the story of his father and his girlfriend in the village that he leaves behind;
- the story of his uncle in another village that is already experiencing prosperity;
- the story of a midwife working with the community to help them understand how to improve their lives by planning their families.

3. **Prepare the draft treatment of the main plot**. Most writers find it easiest to begin by drafting the main plot, but ideas for the other plots inevitably come to mind at the same time. If the writer begins drafting the treatment in a note book, then ideas about other plots can be jotted down as they come to mind.

The main plot must contain a strong and compelling story built around an attention-getting major character. Because the main plot is the most influential in motivating listeners to keep tuning in to the serial, it is wise to map it out in complete detail before finishing any other plots.

4

EXAMPLE

Treatment Summary of a Main Plot: *Grains of Sand in the Sea*

A young man, Yusman (age 22), lives in a very poor village in rural Indonesia. He is in love with a young girl, Dewi (age 18), and they want to marry. Yusman, however, is a proud and ambitious young man. He is determined that he and his wife are not going to spend their lives in the poverty common to everyone in the village where he lives, including his family. Without telling anyone—except Dewi—what he is doing, he runs away to seek his fortune. He is convinced that if he can get to the city, he will earn a lot of money and be able to support his wife in luxury and take care of his father, who is a widower with eight children.

The main plot follows Yusman's adventures for a period of six months. He has many troubles, among them getting lost, being attacked by thieves, and being cheated by his employer after getting a job. He also has good adventures when he is helped by kind people and when he coincidentally meets his uncle, who lives in a distant part of the country in a more prosperous village. In the early episodes, we see Yusman's life in the village, his relationship with his father and Dewi, and his growing discontent with his way of life. Then, suddenly, one day he is gone...nobody knows where. His family is afraid he has been killed. Dewi, a practical, modern young woman, supports what Yusman is doing and believes he will succeed.

The *message* that this plot gradually reveals is that there are modern, sensible ways in which people can raise their standard of living to a more prosperous level. Yusman goes about it the wrong way to begin with, but, through his adventures, the overall message of the series develops: there are steps to take to reach a more prosperous life. The *dramatic conflict* centers on Yusman's anxiety about what he is doing. On the one hand, reality tells him that he is being stupid and should return to his home. On the other hand, his personal pride and ambition persuade him to keep trying to find a better life. There is, at the same time, a *theme* of hope throughout the serial as Yusman stresses his belief that there must be a better way. His hope is justified when he learns how to help the people of his village to improve their lives.

While writing the treatment for each plot, the writer must keep in mind and include all of the following story elements:

- The action, dramatic conflict, climax, and resolution of the plot;
- The time that elapses from beginning to end of the plot;
- The emotional focus;
- The aspect(s) of the message to be covered;
- The setting;
- The major character and his or her predominant personality trait; and
- Other characters and their relationships to the major character.

The characters may be developed in full at this stage, with the completion of a profile, or this can be postponed until later, after the treatment is completed but before script writing commences. (For details on how to develop characters and create profiles, see Chapter 5.)

For example: The following treatment summary outlines the story of the main plot of the Indonesian serial described above. While the finished treatment was longer and more detailed, this summary shows how the main plot encompasses and demonstrates a portion of the message.

4. **Prepare draft treatments for the sub-plots**. After reviewing the main plot treatment, the event list, and the content to be covered by the series, the writer rounds out the sub-plots that will deliver the rest of the message. At this stage, it must be quite clear which parts of the message will be covered by each sub-plot and, consequently, what character types will be needed in each sub-plot.

For example: The writer devised the following sub-plots for the Indonesian story. (Once again, these are given in summary.)

EXAMPLE

Sub-Plot 1
Sofiati's
Story

Sofiati is a young woman who has just completed training as a midwife. She comes from a successful family in Semarang and has not had to work very hard during her life. Although she is somewhat naive, she believes that people can improve their country and their village or town if they work for it. She is excited about moving to the village, but soon after her arrival she realizes that she is not altogether welcome. The villagers believe they are managing on their own quite well and do not want outside help. The village head is openly antagonistic to her, and she becomes unhappy and frustrated.

Sofiati is supposed to work with Sri, the head of the public health center, but there is a strong personality conflict between them which neither can solve. Sofiati meets Dewi, Yusman's girl friend, and likes her because she is different from everyone else in the village. Dewi spends quite a lot of time with Sofiati because she is lonely. She becomes very helpful to Sofiati both as a personal friend and in her work. At the urging of Sri, Dewi eventually becomes a health volunteer.

It is Dewi who brings Sofiati and Sri together, first as colleagues and eventually as friends. The *message* demonstrated by this plot is that the midwife and the community can work together to improve the lives of individual community members and the community as a whole.

Sub-Plot 2
Harjo & Wulan's
Key to Prosperity

Harjo and Wulan are a relatively happy couple, but they are struggling to keep their family happy. They are not always able to pay the school fees for their two children, and they have few clothes. Harjo is a fisherman, so his ability to make a living depends a great deal on the weather. He has a very old boat and cannot fish in bad weather. He spends a great deal of time repairing the old boat, because there is not enough money to replace it.

Their older child may be forced to drop out of school, so Harjo goes to the village head to ask what can be done to avoid this. The village head has just returned from a meeting about a government program called Kukasera that offers small loans. This introduces the main *message* of this plot which is instructing listeners in how to apply for small government loans and use them appropriately.

The village head gives Harjo information about the loans. Harjo goes to the bank manager, Abdul, to apply for a loan for a boat that will allow him to fish more regularly and pay all the school fees. Harjo becomes a role model for his community as his self-owned business succeeds.

One day, Yusman (Harjo's nephew) arrives in the village after having been missing from his own village for a long time. He is very sick and has been trying for some time to find his uncle and stays with him to recover. As Yusman recovers from his illness, he watches and learns from his uncle's work in the village.

Yusman watches his uncle's transformation from a simple fisherman to a leader and role model for his village. The *theme* of this sub-plot is pride.

Sub-Plot 3
Dewi's
Dilemma

This plot follows the fortunes of Dewi, Yusman's girl friend, who had been forced to drop out of school at the age of nine to help with the work on her parents' farm. Her father would like her to marry so that he does not have the burden of supporting her as well as all his other children. Dewi has no special skills and has never been employed in a paying job.

When Yusman leaves the village mysteriously, Dewi's parents encourage her to find someone else to marry and constantly try to arrange meetings for her with likely suitors. Dewi, however, remains faithful in her belief that Yusman will return as a successful man and she dodges all her father's efforts to marry her off. At the same time she is seeking a better life for herself, and she spends time with Sofiati and Sri discussing her dilemmas about her life and Yusman's. She finds that she enjoys the work these women do and she becomes a health volunteer and an important member of the health team.

When Yusman eventually returns to the village, Dewi becomes a strong advocate of the new plans he presents to the community to encourage them to make their lives more prosperous. The *theme* of this sub-plot is patience in the face of difficulty, and this plot reiterates the *messages* that have been incorporated in all the other plots.

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The Message in the Story

The main plot and sub-plots must allow the message to be delivered:
- Naturally;
- Subtly; and
- Gradually.

5. **Decide on a central uniting character** where necessary. In health and family planning serials, for example, nurses, clinic workers, and doctors make useful **central uniting** characters, because they can have an obvious professional relationship with almost any character in any plot. In addition to tying the various plots together, this type of central uniting character helps demonstrate the message in a variety of circumstances. Such a character is far more believable if the drama shows her or him in a family role as well as a professional role. In other serials, such as the Indonesian example above, the central uniting character might be an adventurer who links together the various plots by moving among them. (More information on the creation of this and other characters in the serial can be found in Chapter 5.)

6. **Prepare the full treatment of the plots and message**, combining the main plot and the sub-plots. The writer must make sure that all the plots fit together well and that every aspect of the message can be covered *naturally*, *subtly*, and *gradually* by the story. Many writers of Enter-Educate serials prefer a main plot that does not concentrate heavily on the message. Instead, they create a main plot, like the one above, that attracts and holds the audience with a gripping conflict and a dramatic climax. While the main plot may contain elements of the message, the sub-plots may be better able to convey the precise information required and to demonstrate various aspects of the message.

   For example: The treatment extract of *Too Late, Too Bad* shows that the following messages were woven into the different plots naturally, subtly, and gradually:

   - The importance of planning the family (main plot),
   - The importance of having young people understand the realities of AIDS, including the risk of contracting the disease through uninformed pre-marital sex (sub-plot B),
   - Encouragement of proper care of mothers and infants (sub-plots A and C), and
   - Encouragement of community members to take a more active role in providing for the welfare of mothers and children and in providing adequate sex education for young people to prepare them for adult life (sub-plot C).

   The major conflict in that serial was not related directly to a health and family planning message. Rather, it centered on the feud between two wealthy Sunville families. This "outside-the-message" central conflict allowed the story to attract and hold the attention of the audience, while the various aspects of the message were brought into the story through the sub-plots as a normal part of everyday life in Sunville.

7. **Treatment review**. Before individual scripts are written, the full treatment of the main plot and the sub-plots should be reviewed and approved by the script review panel. The panel meets with the writer to discuss concerns and make suggestions, and changes are made accordingly. Only after the treatment is approved does the writer begin crafting individual scripts.

Enter-Educate Plots

Writers should follow these general guidelines when developing plots for Enter-Educate serials:

1. **Focus on one or two characters**. While several characters may take part in each plot, the story should concentrate on the personality, actions, and interactions of one or two major characters.

2. **Include a clearly identified dramatic conflict** in each plot that differs from the dramatic conflicts featured in the other plots. The dramatic conflict should lead to a crisis as a result of the actions and personality of the major character. While a single plot may include several minor crises, there should be one major crisis in each plot that leads to a dramatic change (whether positive or negative) in the life of the major character.

3. **Link each plot with the others**. Each of the plots in a serial should connect in some way with the others, particularly with the main plot. As in life, so in a radio serial: the resolution of a conflict in one plot can create repercussions, either negative or positive, in another plot. The central uniting character also helps strengthen the connection between plots by playing an important part in each one.

4. **Have a clear and consistent time line**. The writer must establish a firm time line for the serial as a whole, so that the behavior of all the characters in all the plots is logically possible within the given period of time. If the main plot covers a 12-month period, for example, it would be impossible for a woman in one of the sub-plots to give birth to three children during the course of the serial, unless she had twins or triplets. Inexperienced writers and writers who do not prepare a full treatment before scripting often lose track of the time line. Regular listeners, however, rarely do, and, once they detect inconsistencies in time, they will quickly lose trust and interest in the serial. The careful adherence to a specified and limited period of time in a serial is sometimes referred to as unity of time. A sample chart for keeping track of the story's time line is included in Chapter 8.

5. **Be logical**. Even imaginative and exaggerated fiction must be logical if listeners are to take it seriously. In a drama on reproductive health, for example, the writer should avoid suggesting—however inadvertently—that every pregnancy is dangerous or fraught with potential disaster. The listeners know that this is not true. Unless some normal pregnancies occur or are mentioned in the drama, listeners will suspect that the drama is distorting reality for the sake of the message, and they will no longer trust the program's message.

    Frequently, family planning dramas present a husband and wife who are suffering severe economic and emotional hardship as a result of their large number of children. (One serial featured a male who had sired 22 children with three wives in 10 years!) A common mistake is to show their economic and emotional woes disappearing almost overnight when

Guidelines for Enter-Educate Plot

1. Focus on one or two characters.
2. Include a clearly identified dramatic conflict.
3. Link each plot with the others.
4. Have a clear and consistent time line.
5. Be logical.
6. Keep to one main setting.
7. Reflect a predominant emotion.
8. Maintain cultural and linguistic integrity.

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they agree—after many years of hesitation—to adopt family planning. This is illogical and virtually impossible. Moreover, it is misleading, because it suggests that, no matter how many children a couple has, as soon as they agree to plan their family, everything will work out all right.

Another frequent mistake in social dramas is suggesting that a character becomes perfect in every respect once he or she adopts the recommended new behavior. Consider a husband who is portrayed as a business failure, a spendthrift, and a drunkard, and who has insisted that his wife continue to give birth until she presents him with a son. During the course of the drama, he learns from the health worker that the male is responsible for the sex of the children and agrees to accept his daughters and practice contraception. At the same time, miraculously, his business becomes a success, he starts saving his money, and he gives up alcohol. While this outcome is theoretically possible, it is neither logical nor believable! Even fiction must be logical.

6. **Keep to one setting**. Each plot should have its own unique, established setting; this is referred to as **unity of place**. While characters can visit a new location whenever the plot demands, it is easier for the audience to follow the story if most of the action in each plot takes place in an established setting.

7. **Reflect a predominant or characteristic emotion**. In a serial of limited duration (that is, 52 episodes or fewer), each plot should evoke one predominant emotion rather than try to cover a range of emotions. The major character of each plot, and his or her actions, must evoke some degree of recognition and response from audience members, even if they dislike the character. The aim is for the audience to experience *emotional involvement* with the developing crisis in the character's life. The emotional response of the audience can be negative or positive—anger or fear, pity or love—but a plot that fails to arouse a particular emotional reaction in the audience will fail to hold their interest or influence their behavior.

8. **Maintain cultural and linguistic integrity**. Each plot is different from all the rest. While the characters in some plots may share similar backgrounds and life styles, the characters in other plots may live under quite different circumstances. The writer must ensure that the characters in each plot remain true to their circumstances, speaking and acting in accordance with their background and life style. Maintaining the cultural and linguistic integrity of each plot heightens the reality of the story.

In a serial designed to convey the value and accessibility of higher education, for example, one plot might be set in a city university. To make this plot believable, the writer should ensure that the characters use language appropriate to urban university students. The writer must also provide clear word pictures to enable a rural audience to experience the city university and its personnel in a believable way. (Some guidelines on the creation and use of word pictures are included in Chapter 7.)

Once the various plots have been established and approved in treatment form, writing of individual episodes can begin. Here again, the process is

more complicated and needs closer monitoring when the serial has a social development purpose than when it is pure entertainment. The writer should create, at least for the early episodes, an episode treatment to ensure that the story is developing logically and that the message is being presented at the right speed and in the correct sequence.

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Chapter Summary

- The writer should keep in mind the ten aims of plot development, which deal with the importance of emotion, human stories, culture, conveying ideas rather than words, demonstrating the message, humor, positive ideas, trust, advocacy, and originality.

- Good writers avoid clichéd works and create dramas that are both familiar and original at the same time.

- Successfully combining story and message requires:
  1. Knowing the information in the Writer's Brief;
  2. Preparing an event list; and
  3. Creating plots that allow the message to be introduced naturally, subtly, and gradually.

- A writer can follow a sequence of steps in plot development that will encourage the successful blending of message and story.

Chapter Five

Character Development

Characters are most successful if they are modeled after real people known to the writer.

Learning Objectives

■ To know the number and types of characters to select for an Enter-Educate serial.

■ To be aware of the range of character types from which a writer can choose.

■ To appreciate the importance of compiling detailed profiles of all major characters in order to maintain believability and consistency.

■ To understand how to make characters realistic and attractive to the listening audience.

■ To know appropriate uses for non-characters, including the narrator and the host.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, work from the list of potential characters for an Enter-Educate serial to decide on the main characters for each of the plots you developed for the exercise in Chapter 4. Then prepare a detailed profile for each one.

Draft some dialogue involving two or more of these characters, perhaps in reaction to one of the incidents on the event list you compiled for the exercise in the last chapter. This will help you determine whether your characters are sufficiently well delineated and are different enough from one another to allow for dramatic interaction.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The importance of characters**

❖ **Guidelines for character creation**

❖ **Selecting characters:**
   Heroes and heroines
   Villains and antagonists

❖ **Creating characters and profiles**

❖ **Bringing characters to life**

❖ **Non-characters:**
   The use of a narrator
   The use of a host

The Importance of Characters

A story cannot exist without characters to carry out the action of the plot. Each plot in a radio serial drama, including the main plot and the sub-plots, has its own action, dramatic conflict, and climax, and its own set of characters. Choosing these characters is a challenging task in Enter-Educate drama, because they must be both entertaining and well-suited to the demonstration and delivery of the message to the chosen audience. The detailed creation of characters for a serial begins as the plots start to take shape and depends on a thorough understanding of the Writer's Brief. The following guidelines also can help writers fully develop Enter-Educate characters.

Character Creation

Characters in a radio serial for social development should be:

1. Realistic and believable;

2. Appropriate to the message;

3. Appropriate to the audience;

4. Varied in personality;

5. Limited in number; and

6. Adults rather than children.

Guidelines for Character Creation

All characters created for an Enter-Educate serial should be:

1. **Realistic and believable.** Nobody is perfect, and no one possesses a perfectly balanced personality. All radio drama characters must exhibit dominant personality traits or characteristics that help make them who they are. There are many personality traits—both good and bad—that characters in a drama can exhibit. Some common ones are:

innocence	laziness	ambition
nervousness	shyness	pride
egoism	rudeness	energy
insecurity	stubbornness	honesty
curiosity	dishonesty	slyness
reliability	creativity	greed
spontaneity	thoughtfulness.	

It is these personality traits, whether negative or positive, that trigger the action in a drama. The major character's dominant personality trait should cause the dramatic conflict and crisis in the story and also shape its resolution. It is important, therefore, to determine the major character's personality traits at the outset and decide how they will affect the other characters.

Many stories fail because the writer creates a main character who is wholly good, without any flaw or personality quirk. This is unrealistic, and such characters are generally boring. They can become more interesting and realistic, however, if their good personality traits inadvertently land them in trouble.

For example: The leading character of a drama is Amitra, a beautiful and intelligent young woman. She is polite and modest, but her modesty is exaggerated to the point of extreme shyness and self-effacement. She is a high school student and would like to have a professional career that continues even after she marries. Amitra has had no education about sexual matters, and her crippling shyness makes it impossible for her to discuss such things with her family, her friends, or even the local health worker.

It is easy to see how Amitra's exaggerated shyness could lead to problems, such as conflict in her married life, and ultimately to a serious crisis. If she does not overcome her shyness and learn how to delay the birth of her first child, for example, she undoubtedly will become pregnant soon after marriage. If she does not learn to speak openly with her husband, she may have child after child without any idea of how to space them correctly—at the cost of her professional plans. If Amitra can overcome her shyness, however, the whole shape of her life may well be different.

As the audience comes to know, love, and respect Amitra, they become increasingly eager for her to maintain her attractive traits of politeness and modesty but to gain control over the extreme shyness which could ruin an otherwise promising life.

A serial must establish the dominant personality trait of the major character in each plot early on, so that the audience can begin to anticipate what will happen as a result. Listeners everywhere are excited when they think, "Uh oh, I can guess what's going to happen now." They enjoy the feeling that they know what is going to happen—even before the character does—because they can predict how the character will respond to a certain situation. This feeling of knowledgeable anticipation is possible only if the audience is given the opportunity to know and understand the characters so well that they seem like part of their lives.

Realism also demands that major characters be given roles in life that make it plausible for them to affect the lives of many people. For example, in the drama *Too Late, Too Bad* (which was introduced in Chapter 3), the major character in the main plot is Steven Stan, a wealthy, powerful man who, because of his position in the town, can and does influence the lives of many of Sunville's residents.

2. **Appropriate to the message** of the serial, so that the characters can be

involved naturally and believably with the message content. For example, doctors and nurses are obvious choices as characters when the message is health-related. Other characters also should be considered, however, such as a builder who can encourage men to construct latrines to protect their families' health.

3. **Appropriate to the audience**. The audience should recognize the characters' culture, life habits, and general standard of living. If the audience is largely rural and poor, then at least some of the drama's characters who eventually demonstrate the new behavior must also fall in the same category.

4. **Varied in personality**. By varying the personalities of the characters involved in the serial's many plots, the writer creates an opportunity for a wide range of emotional interactions among them. A variety of personality types—from pessimistic and grumpy to lighthearted and outgoing—also increases the likelihood that listeners will find at least one character who is similar to themselves or someone they know.

5. **Limited in number**. No more than three or four characters should appear regularly in the main plot, and two or three in each of the sub-plots. While extra characters can appear occasionally, regularly appearing characters in all the plots in a serial should total no more than 12 to 15. This makes it easier for the audience to remember who is who. It also facilitates the casting of actors and lowers production costs.

As few as two or three characters can create excitement, emotion, and action. Moreover, the writer can create the illusion that more people are present by referring to or discussing characters who do not speak.

This short extract includes seven people: the two speakers plus five other

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EXAMPLE

4. <u>FX. GENERAL BACKGROUND NOISE OF PEOPLE AT A MEETING.</u>

5. BO: Looks like a great gathering here tonight. There's Grandpa Moss over there. Oh, Hi, Mrs. Green. I'd like you to meet my wife.

6. MO: Hello Mrs. Green... It's nice to see you. Oh, look, even Peg is here tonight. What a meeting this will be. Let me see if I can find John and ask him to get things going. Bo, you go and find Letty and tell her to get the tea started.

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characters whose presence is mentioned but who do not speak. The overall feeling of a room full of people is achieved without having to use a lot of actors.

6. **Adults rather than children**. It is wise to avoid child characters, because

they are difficult to cast and cannot always be relied upon to come when needed. While it may be necessary to include some child characters in a series on family life or family planning, their appearance should be limited. For radio, it may be possible to find adult actors who can make their voices sound like adolescent and pre-adolescent children. It is difficult, however, to find actors—either children or adults—who can play the roles of children under ten years of age convincingly. Frequent references to child characters, who are not actually heard, can make them seem "real" to the audience and eliminate the need to hire an actor to play the part.

In the following scene, the child, Amila, is referred to several times, giving the audience a sense of her presence even though she never speaks.

EXAMPLE

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14. KANIZ: He's got terrible diarrhea...I just can't make it stop.

15. MOTHER: What are you giving him?

16. KANIZ: Nothing...every time I give him anything, he throws it up again.

17. MOTHER: Did you give him some salt and molasses mixture?

18. KANIZ: No...what's that?

19. MOTHER: It will prevent your baby from being dehydrated. I'll tell you how to mix it.

20. KANIZ: What do I need?

21. MOTHER: Clean boiled water...and salt...and molasses.

22. KANIZ: Molasses? I don't have any molasses. Could your little Amila run to the store and get some for me?

23. MOTHER: Of course Amila can go. She knows the way, but I'm afraid it won't do any good...old Sam has been forgetful again. He has forgotten to get in any supplies of molasses.

24. KANIZ: Then what am I to do... How can I help my baby?

25. MOTHER: I have plenty of molasses...my mother-in-law gave me several jars two weeks ago. Come on inside, Kaniz, and we'll make the mixture together. Amila can help. It is time she learned how to do these things.

26.   Let's see. We need first a clean washed container... Amila, get that basin over there and wash it for me.

27. <u>FX. SOUNDS OF WATER BEING POURED. SCRUBBING OF BASIN. WATER BEING EMPTIED</u>.

Selecting Characters

The writer must choose characters who can fulfill all the requirements of the message in a natural manner. The event list created during plot development will dictate which characters are necessary. The event list for *Grains of Sand in the Sea* (Chapter 4), for example, requires these characters:

- A young couple about to be married;

- A woman within the first few months of pregnancy;

- A couple with two children who choose to use an IUD to limit their family's size;

- A family that has been very poor but is now starting to move up in life;

- A midwife;

- A headstrong community member who does not listen to advice; and

- A respected community member (or couple) to whom others turn for guidance.

Listeners find a serial more attractive when the characters who fulfill the essential roles are distinctly different from one another. A wide range of characters also allows the message to be presented and repeated in a more natural fashion. Because an effective serial motivates change of many kinds, it is useful to include characters who can portray each of the various Steps to Behavior Change—that is, knowledge, approval, intention, practice, and advocacy (see the Prologue). Writers should consider the following options, including both heroes and villains.

Heroes and Heroines

These characters possess positive values and respond constructively to the serial's message. They must have some dominant personality trait, however, that makes each one unique and that may cause problems for or bring benefits to other people.

1. **The suffering hero or heroine**. This is a generally "good" person who becomes involved in a conflict through no fault of his or her own. The hero or heroine usually suffers because of a positive personality trait that is exaggerated, such as being too trusting, or because of a personality weakness, such as being careless about small details. In the long run, however, heroes and heroines prevail against the evil forces aligned against them because of their outstanding moral virtue.

    Alternatively, the hero or heroine's role in the drama might be to make a positive impact on the lives of other people (as would be the case, for example, for the older couple described below). This type of heroic character also

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Range of Characters for Enter-Educate Drama

Heroes and Heroines:

1. Individual hero or heroine
2. Older, reliable couple
3. Young couple facing life together
4. Counselor, sage, advisor, advocate
5. Central uniting character
6. Seeker
7. Comic

Villains or Antagonists:

1. Individual evil villain
2. Doubter, skeptic
3. Young couple without mutual support
4. Wayward youngster

should be realistic rather than perfect, with some personality trait that makes listeners feel they might know him or her in real life.

2. **The older couple**. These are solid, reliable citizens who are respected and admired in their community. They have a traditional outlook but are willing to consider new ideas. Their approval of a new idea encourages many members of the community to change their attitudes.

3. **The young couple facing life together**. These two young people work together and support one another as they face life's challenges and try to make a good start to their married lives.

4. **The counselor, advisor, advocate, or sage**. This may be a leader, who guides the community towards the new behavior, or an advisor, to whom other characters turn for support when things go wrong. A religious leader, doctor, teacher, spouse, or a respected community elder frequently fills this role. It may also be played by a person who has no great authority in the community but whose integrity commands respect.

5. **The central uniting character**. A central uniting character who constantly supports the message can be helpful in Enter-Educate drama. If such a character is to be truly effective in influencing the listening audience to accept and practice new behaviors, however, she or he must be portrayed as a real person with weaknesses as well as strengths. Listeners will find a stereotyped model of virtue both dull and unrealistic.

6. **The seeker**. This character is looking for a new and better way of life. Frequently the seeker comes under the influence of one of the villains and may appear, for a time, to lose his or her good intentions. Eventually, however, strong personality traits save the seeker, who triumphs in the end. The seeker may be given comic characteristics and may be used to express doubts and misunderstandings that listeners are reluctant to express.

7. **The comic**. Often not really a hero or heroine, this character has personality traits, such as clumsiness, forgetfulness, or brainlessness, that listeners find endearing even when they lead to foolish and amusing behavior. The truly entertaining comic displays, in an exaggerated fashion, a weakness that all human beings possess but would rather not acknowledge. The comic need not be a separate character in the drama. Instead, comic characteristics can be incorporated into the personality of another character, such as the seeker or the doubter. In some dramas, the comic, although regarded as foolish, demonstrates the fundamental truths of life better than other people. It may be the comic who eventually leads the other characters to appreciate the need for change in their behavior. (This can be seen in the character of Percy in the drama, *The Other Side* in Chapter 13.)

Villains and Antagonists

These are the people who oppose, conflict with, or make life difficult for the heroes and heroines. They are not always wicked by nature, but their

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personality traits bring harm to other characters and impede the progress of the story.

1. **The evil villain**. This character opposes the major hero or heroine openly and dramatically. He or she usually does have evil intentions, will probably remain evil throughout the serial, and ultimately will come to a bad end.

2. **The doubter or skeptic**. This character is intelligent enough to understand the value of the new ideas being promoted but is so egotistical that he or she believes that no one else's ideas can be equal to his or her own. Consequently, the doubter tries to point out every little thing that might go wrong with adopting the new behavior and blocks its adoption by others. This character, who frequently becomes the most popular in the story, is especially valuable in an Enter-Educate serial because he or she expresses the doubts and fears that may nag listeners. The eventual conversion of the doubter, who ultimately supports and begins to practice the new behaviors, creates trust and belief in the listeners.

    Because the doubter is not inherently evil and does not deliberately hurt other people, listeners instinctively are attracted to him or her and find themselves silently cheering for his or her success. Perhaps the truth is that most people are skeptical or stubborn about some things in life, and this allows listeners to feel a little better about their own weaknesses. The character of Littlejohn in *Life in Hopeful Village* (see Chapter 12) is a classic example of the skeptic who attracts the sympathy of the audience.

3. **The young couple starting out in life without mutual trust and respect**. This young man and woman blame everyone and everything for their troubles. They are particularly antagonistic to a neighboring young couple who are working together on life's problems. They demonstrate to the audience what happens to those who refuse or are slow to adopt the new behaviors.

4. **The wayward youngster**. The rashness of youth leads this character to challenge traditional beliefs and to make mistakes, sometimes with serious negative results for other people. This character gains wisdom slowly, if somewhat painfully. By the end of the story, the wayward youth has become a hero or heroine.

While heroes and heroines may attract the sympathy of the listeners, the audience probably will enjoy some of the villains more. A converted villain frequently makes a more convincing role model than does a near-perfect heroine. Most people identify more easily with the imperfections of a villain than with the flawlessness of a hero or heroine. Remembering this, the writer should create one major character who is attractive in spite of somewhat negative attitudes and behaviors.

Creating Characters and Profiles

Every story in the world revolves around a major character, who is sometimes referred to as the "protagonist" (from two Greek words, *"prōtos"* meaning "first" and *"agōnistēs"* meaning "actor"). Other characters will be involved, directly and indirectly, with this person and with the action of the story, but it is the protagonist who experiences the main action, dramatic conflict, and climax. The personality and behavior of the protagonist, therefore, is of paramount importance to the development and success of the story. The protagonist of the main plot—whether or not that person also serves as the central uniting character—is also critical to the serial's ability to attract and hold an audience.

To make the major character, and the other characters, come alive for listeners, the writer first must become familiar with every detail of their lives. One of the surest ways to gain this familiarity is by drawing up a **profile** for each one. A profile is a detailed, written description of the character. Some writers keep this information on file cards; others use a notebook or computer. Each profile should contain at least the following information about the character:

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- Position in the family, e.g., sister, in-law, or grandparent
- Job
- Life ambition
- Level of education
- Time lived in the present place, e.g., all his/her life or recent arrival
- Age
- Religious beliefs
- Attitude toward change and new ideas
- Appearance, including height, weight, color of eyes, hair color and style, and other physical characteristics
- Interests or hobbies (even in poor communities, people develop special interests, e.g., in music, painting, or growing flowers)
- Pets and farm animals owned
- Favorite food(s)
- Favorite color(s)
- Habits, e.g., smoking, drinking, oversleeping, laughing a lot, or leaving the keys in the car
- Personality trait or weakness that distinguishes the character and conflicts with the personalities of other characters
- Personal fear or dislike, e.g., hates insects, scared of deep water, or afraid of the dark
- Speech characteristics, e.g., speaks quickly, drawls, stutters, or speaks in brief, broken sentences
- Commonly used remark or "catch phrase," e.g., the catch phrase of the famous American cartoon character, Bugs Bunny: "Er...what's up, Doc?" Having a character habitually repeat some phrase is especially helpful in the creation of comic characters.

While not every item in the profile may appear in the drama, it is important that the writer round out the details as fully as possible on paper before drafting a script. This simple list of characteristics evokes a sense of what a character would be like in real life. It also ensures that each character is portrayed consistently throughout the serial. In addition, the profiles—especially the dominant personality traits of the characters—may suggest directions for the drama's plots and how the various characters might interact.

*T*he following profiles, from the draft treatment of the proposed Indian serial, *Heart to Heart* (which was never broadcast), show how characters become increasingly real as details about them are provided.

Dr. Amit	Kamal	Renu	Wardboy (Raju)
(Doctor in charge of the clinic; central uniting character)	**(Older, male role-model; advocate of new behavior)**	**(Kamal's wife, with same interest in advocating new behavior)**	**(The seeker)**
Age: 40 - 50	Age: 37 - 38	Age: 33.	Age: 20 - 22
MBBS Degree (Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery).	Has a limp from polio contracted as a child because his parents did not have him vaccinated	Education: Grade 8 pass	Education: failed 8th grade in school.
Has had some training in communication and is a good communicator.	Practical, wise, serious, very caring; loves his two daughters and his wife	Beautiful, although a little plump.	Skinny and lanky; not very strong physically.
Is an excellent teacher and enjoys helping people learn.	No regrets for not having a son. Chose to have only two children because he suffered from being one of seven and he saw his mother suffer from having so many children. She actually had more than seven, but several babies died.	Happy and healthy.	Grew up in a large family with an irresponsible father and was not properly cared for.
Has done some traveling in his own country and closely observed how others doctors in charge of clinics perform their duties.		Modest, neat, clean and tidy.	Ran away from home and was involved in traffic accident outside the clinic. He was taken in for treatment and has remained there ever since (3 years).
		She likes all food, and sometimes objects to her husband's insistence on what he calls "healthy" foods.	
He is a little plump; he really enjoys his food.	Owns a general store, which his wife runs most of the time, while he works part-time in a typing shop.	Outgoing, sociable, and willing to talk to other women in the community who would like to know how to be like her.	Devoted to doctor and his wife.
Going grey, but a full head of hair.			Wears a uniform to work, but off duty likes to wear T shirts and crazy caps, especially if they are bright red.
Height: 5'9"	Eats sparingly and has a passion for what he calls "healthy" foods.	Supportive of her husband and her daughters.	
Moustache, also going grey.	Slightly bald and beginning to go grey.	Works in the shop that she and Kamal own. She works long hours and is always willing to talk to people who come to	Energetic off the job.
Disciplined in his work, and very clear in the way he presents things.			Good at fixing things.
			Ignorant about the "facts of life." Always

Dr. Amit cont'd.	**Kamal cont'd.**	**Renu cont'd.**	**Wardboy cont'd.**
Dedicated to helping people through his profession. His only fear is letting down his clients or not doing his job well.	Slim to the point of being skinny.	the shop for goods or to drink tea.	questioning clinic personnel or listening in as they talk to their clients.

Dedicated to helping people through his profession. His only fear is letting down his clients or not doing his job well.

Occasionally he is short-tempered with staff members who are unprofessional on the job.

He is married. His wife is between 35 and 40 years of age. She teaches music and dance at the local school.

They have one adopted child. They have suffered the disappointment of infertility, but adore their adopted daughter.

Always punctual and is irritated by people who cannot be on time

Personality trait: he is forgetful in his personal life (although never forgetful on the job).

He will sometimes forget his tie, or wear shoes that don't match or forget where he put his keys.

Fills the role of teacher and counselor in the drama.

Slim to the point of being skinny.

Has a strong dislike of dirt and untidiness.

Has graduated from high school, and would like to have more education, but cannot afford the time or the money for it.

Determined that his daughters will both have a good education.

Determined to give his family a good life.

Personality trait: impatient to the point of rudeness with people who cannot see the sense in regulating family size.

Together with Renu, fills the role of highly respected member of the community and role model to the audience.

the shop for goods or to drink tea.

Loves to watch street theater and to sing. She has a favorite song which she often sings or hums while she is working in the shop.

Personality trait: maintains some traditional reticence. Although she can talk to other people, she cannot bring herself to talk openly to her daughters about sex and related matters.

questioning clinic personnel or listening in as they talk to their clients.

Likes to "spy" on the nurse and the male health worker (the love interest in the drama).

Naughty at times when his youth and high spirits get to be too much for him.

Personality trait: Lazy on the job and has to be reminded of his duties.

Frequently says, "I'm sorry...I'm sorry," even before he has been accused of anything.

Owns a small goat that he rescued from drowning in a drain.

5

In addition to detailed profiles, many writers like to draw up a character map that shows clearly how individual characters within a single plot or among many plots are related or connected. This map resembles a family tree, but it records more than kinship. It also shows which characters are neighbors, friends, co-workers, and the like. The following example, was drawn up for the Nepali drama, *Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth.*

Character Map

Shersingh Thapa, 56 yrs. old.
He is Protagonist. His wife is Maya Devi. They have three children—Saraswati (girl), Gopi and Bire (sons). He thinks Bam Bahadur is his enemy.

▼ **wife**

Maya Devi Thapa, 53 yrs. old.
Her brother Shyam works in a factory.

brother

Dambarsing Thapa, 49 yrs. old.
He is younger brother of Shersingh. He is educated. He is a school teacher with a new outlook. He doesn't discriminate between sons and daughers. He advises everybody to change in accordance with the present time. He often gives advice to Shersingh to get along with Bam Bahadur.

enemy

Bam Bahadur Basnet, 47 yrs. old.
He is a feudal of Salghari village. He is Antagonist to Shersingh. He says he is the biggest bomb, the bravest bomb.

▼ **son**

Gopi, 36 yrs. old.
He is the eldest son of Shersingh and Maya Devi. He is uneducated. His outlook is traditional. His wife is Laxmi, and they have daughters only.

▼ **wife**

Laxmi, 36 yrs. old.
She is Gopi's wife. She is uneducated.

▼ **daughter**

Saraswati, 33 yrs. old.
She is Shersingh and Maya Devi's daughter. She is married to a man in another village. She has only one daughter. She has had health worker training but doesn't work as a health worker. She has modern outlook.

▼ **son**

Bir Bahadur or (Bire), 31 yrs. old.
He is youngest son of Shersingh and Maya Devi. He is educated. His wife is Beli. She is also educated. These partners have good understanding and cooperation between them.

▼ **wife**

Beli, 27 yrs. old.
She is Bire's wife. She is educated. She has modern outlook as Bire.

Hark Bahadur Rant, 29 yrs. old.
He is illiterate and a friend of Bire. His wife is Putali. They have childre—Bhunti (girl) and Gore (son).

▼ **wife**

Putali, 27 yrs. old.
She is Harke's wife and uneducated. She is a friend of Beli.

Bam Bahadur's followers

Kainla Mijar
He is an uneducated villager. He belongs to Kami (blacksmith) family. He follows Bam Gahadur. His wife is Kainli.

▼ **wife**

Kainli Mijarni
She is Kainla's wife and uneducated. They have many children

Kagkhutti
She is a woman who has been away from Salgahari but returns and finds it changing and opposes the new change. She believes in tradition and supports Bam Bahadur.

Govinda Nagarchi
He is village tailor. He has one wife. He is modern thinking even being uneducated. Gore, village blacksmith is his friend (mit).

friends

Gore Bishowkarma
He is a village balcksmith and a close friend Amit" of Govinda Nagarchi. He has a wife.

Health Workers

Meera Sharma, 23 yrs. old.
She is a health worker. She is from Thakall family (third in caste ranking) and got married to Sharma family (Bramin). Previously she was a teacher and when her husband passed away she became a health worker. She works for Salghari and it's neighboring villages.

Arjun Pahadi, 38 yrs. old.
He is a health worker from a neighboring village. He helps Salghari village people in the absence of Meera Sharma.

Other Characters

- **Firfire**, 33 yrs. old. He is the village clown.
- **Ramlochan Mahato**, He is from Terai village. He is the village leader. He came to the Salghari village long ago and started to teach there. Now he is living in the village permanently.
- **Naksule Pandit**, He is a village Pandit (Brahmin, pundit). He and his wife Rama are childless. Later Rama bears a child after visiting a clinic in Kathmandu.
- **Dorje**, 56 yrs. old. He is a village jhankri (Shamin, witch doctor).
- **Keshab Khatiwoda**, He is from a nearby village of Simpani.
- **Ganga Ram Shrestha**, 45 yr. old man, married and living in Salghari village.
- **Bhanu Maya Palikhe**, 33 yr. old woman, has four children, and lives outside the Salghari village.

5

Writers should strive to create characters that inspire listeners to say, "I know somebody just like that," or, "That reminds me of ....." In some cases, characters in serials have become so real to listeners that they have sent gifts to a favorite character who became ill or was married or celebrated a special event as part of the story. Having the audience recognize the characters as personal friends is a big step in ensuring the success of a serial.

Bringing Characters to Life

Listeners discover the personalities of the characters in radio serials in the same four ways that they learn about people in everyday life. That is, they consider:

- What a person does;
- What a person says;
- What others say about a person; and
- How a person reacts to particular circumstances.

Radio is an ideal medium for revealing both what a person says and what others say about him or her.

The following short dialogue between a farmer and a store keeper reveals something of their natures without either making any direct comments about the personality of the other.

EXAMPLE

1. <u>FX. SHOP DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING.</u>

2. FARMER: (OFF) 'Morning, Fred

3. FRED: Morning.

4. FARMER: (COMING IN) I haven't seen you in a long time, Fred. (ON MICROPHONE) Mind you, that doesn't mean I've been going to any one else's store.

5. FRED: True.

6. FARMER: But now suddenly I seem to need all sorts of things. Mind you, that doesn't mean I've come into money or anything.

7. FRED: Right.

8. FARMER: Let's see, I need some fencing wire...Er...was there something else?... Mind you, I could use a new shovel.

9. FRED: Shovel. Right. You planting this year?

10. FARMER: Yes. Potatoes, I think. I've heard good things about potatoes. Mind you, one can't believe everything one hears.

11. FRED: True.

ETC.

Because the listening audience only can *hear* and not *see* what a radio character does, it is dialogue that must make a character's behavior and actions clear. Listeners frequently learn about characters by hearing what others say about their behavior.

In the following extract from the Nigerian radio drama, *Four Is Our Choice*, the main characters, Emeka and Nneka, reveal something of their own personalities as they discuss the party they have been hosting. Other characters, however, also shed light on their personalities and behavior as they talk *about* them.

Four Is Our Choice   Page 1 of 2
Episode #1   Draft: #2
Writer: Fabian Adibe   Date: October 10, 1992

1. MUST. SIGNATURE TUNE UP :05 FADE AND HOLD UNDER
    ANNOUNCER.

2. ANN: Welcome to our new radio play, FOUR IS OUR CHOICE.
                    It is the story of the life of townspeople, Emeka and his wife,
                    Nneka, and the conflicts of traditional and modern life that
                    face people like them in today's world. As we join Emeka and
                    Nneka, a party is just ending....

3. MUSIC. SIGNATURE MUSIC UP :03. CROSS FADE TO

4. FX. PARTY NOISES. COMING TO AN END. FADE UNDER
    AND OUT.

5. JOE: (OFF SLIGHTLY) Thanks, Emeka. Thanks, Nneka. You've
                    been wonderful. Great party.

6. EMEKA: Thanks for coming, Joe.

7. NNEKA: (CALLING AFTER HIM) We hope you enjoyed yourself.

8. JOE: (OFF) Sure...sure... Good night.

9. NNEKA/EMEKA:
                    Good night.

10. VOICE: (OFF SINGING) For they are jolly good fellows. For they
                    are jolly good fellows.

11. OTHER VOICES JOIN IN THE SONG AND COMPLETE
    THE VERSE.
                    For they are jolly good fellows...and so say
                    all of us (CHEER).

12. FX. AT END OF SONG GREETINGS ARE EXCHANGED AS
    EVERYONE DEPARTS.

13. EMEKA: Waoo....What a party!

14. NNEKA: (LAUGHING) Your colleague Chidi is a real life and soul of
                    the party. What a load of humor he has.

15. EMEKA: (LAUGHING) I thoroughly enjoyed the one about the old
                    man who thought the study of animal husbandry meant that
                    soon men will be marrying animals....

16. THEY BOTH LAUGH

17. NNEKA: (YAWNING) Well, Emeka, I'm going to bed now. I'm tired.

18. EMEKA: Me, too. And I hope no one disturbs us for a hundred years.

19. MUSIC. SCENE TRANSITION.

SCENE TWO

20. FX. URGENT KNOCK AT DOOR.

21. VOICE :   (WAKING SUDDENLY) Who...who is that? I'm coming.

5

Four Is Our Choice		Page 2 of 2
Episode #1		Draft: #2
Writer: Fabian Adibe		Date: October 10, 1992

22. EM: (OFF) I am Emeka's mother.

23. <u>FX. DOOR OPENING.</u>

24. VOICE: Oh. Emeka...he lives at the front.

25. EM: I know. I've been knocking and knocking, but there's no answer.

26. VOICE: That's not surprising. They were partying till the wee small hours of the morning. I've never heard such a racket.

27. EM: Partying? What for?

28. VOICE: Better ask your son. He must be celebrating something we don't know about.

29. EM: Celebrating? But...what?

30. VOICE: While we neighbors worry about their plight, those two live it up with monthly parties and so on...we've long since given up worrying about them.

31. EM: Hmm. So you think they are in?

32. VOICE: Oh yes, they are in, madam.

33. EM: Then I will go and continue knocking.

END OF SCENE

These two short scenes help listeners understand Emeka and Nneka from the outset. They also attract the listeners' attention by raising unanswered questions: Why has Mother Emeka come? And why are the neighbors worried about Emeka and Nneka? Listeners also wonder about the real character of Emeka's mother, which has yet to be revealed. Is she just a busybody checking up on her son and his wife? Or is she a caring mother who has an important reason to visit her son?

The way in which characters react to situations also reveals a great deal about their personalities and their emotional states.

In the following short scene, three characters react in completely different ways to the news of civil war.

EXAMPLE

12. ESAU:	(RUNNING IN) It's over... it's all over. The president has been overthrown. Civil war has broken out.
13. FATHER:	(SCREAMING) All is lost. Help me...help me...Oh my God... even the gods cannot help. We are finished.
14. ESAU:	(AFRAID) What shall we do? Where can we go? I must get my money. All my money. I'm not going to let them get that. Help me...get some bags and help me get the money.
15. FATHER:	(WAILING) Help us someone...help us...We will be killed. Oooooh.
16. BONGANI:	Wait. Be quiet, my father...We will find an answer. But we must think. We must work out a way.
17. FATHER:	(WAILING) There is no way... we are all finished. Ooooh.
18. ESAU:	Stop preaching, Bongani. They're going to rob us...steal everything we have. I'm not listening to you. I'm getting my money out of here.
19. BONGANI:	(FIRMLY) Be quiet, brother. Listen to me. I know a place where we can go. I have prepared this place for just such an event. Now, listen, all of you.

5

Revealing a character's personality in a natural manner through dialogue—either the personal dialogue of the character or the dialogue of others speaking about that character—is a challenging task. It is much easier when writers know their characters well, which points once again to the importance of detailed profiles.

Non-Characters

Sometimes people who are not characters in the plots of the serial also appear in the radio program. These non-characters include the narrator and the host.

The Use of a Narrator

Writers frequently face the question of whether or not to include a narrator in a radio serial. A narrator is a person who tells, or narrates, a story. In a story that is not dramatized, such as a novel, the characters' lives are revealed for them by the narrator. It is part of the very definition of a drama, however, that the characters tell their own stories. Therefore, it can be confusing for a drama to employ a narrator. Typically on radio, as was discussed in Chapter 3, the narrator speaks only at the beginning and end of each episode to remind listeners of past action, introduce the coming episode, and alert them about what to anticipate the next time they tune in.

The writer's first instinct should be against including a narrator except at the beginning and end of the drama. A narrator slows the action and breaks the sense of reality of the story. There are a few occasions, however, when a narrator—if skillfully employed—can be used in a serial drama. There are three approaches to narration.

1. **The first-person narrator.** The major character of the serial introduces his own story in narrative form and then slips into the role of a character to bring the tale to life. The first-person narrator is both the teller of the tale and a participant in it.

In the serial drama, *The Doctor's Diary,* an elderly doctor looks back over his life, recounts some of his adventures, and passes on valuable information and lessons to the listening audience. Each episode of the serial opens with the doctor's narration, as illustrated here:

EXAMPLE

4. DOCTOR: It was an extraordinary adventure really. I had never been away
    (as narrator)   from my own home before, and I was still quite young...barely
                    twenty five years old. And now the whole responsibility of the
                    health care of this island was to be on my shoulders. (FADING
                    OUT) I remember well the day I arrived...

5. MUSIC. DRAMA THEME MUSIC UP :05. CROSS FADE TO FX AND OUT.

6. FX. SOUNDS OF BUSY HARBOR. CAR HORNS. PEOPLE SHOUTING.
    ETC. FADE UNDER SPEECH.

7. ELDER: (OFF SLIGHTLY) Ah, doctor, we are so happy that you have
                    arrived. (ON) We have been waiting for you. There are so many
                    people ill on our island.

8. DOCTOR: I'm happy to be here, sir. My name is Doctor Lakut. Dr. Leos
    (as character) Lakut.

After the doctor's opening narration, the story shifts to dramatic form, and the doctor becomes a character in the serial. He will go back into the role of narrator as required, however, to explain the passage of time, the movement from one place to another, or the relationship of a past event to present time.

After the listeners have heard—in dramatic form—the doctor's experiences with a bad outbreak of cholera on the island, the doctor switches back to the role of narrator.

EXAMPLE

21. DOCTOR: I suppose it was about that time I began to realize that it is not
    (as narrator)   enough for a doctor to try to cure diseases; he must also work at
                     preventing them. I saw a whole new focus for my life, and I began
                     to see that one of the major causes of the disease and misery on this
                     island was the sheer number of its inhabitants—and they were
                     increasing rapidly. I think that's when I moved from being a doctor
                     to being an advocate. (FADING OUT) I first spoke up about
                     family planning at a church meeting...

22. FX. CHURCH BELLS. NOISE OF CONGREGATION SETTLING
    IN CHURCH.

23. DOCTOR: (FADING IN) And so, my friends, I want to speak to you today
    (as character)   about a subject that is of great importance to all of us...family size...

The action then continues in dramatic from, as the doctor addresses the church meeting.

When a serial includes a first-person narrator, like the doctor, he (or she) should be used in every episode so that listeners accept the idea that the narrator is both telling his (or her) own story and taking part in it. The dramatic interludes are essentially an extension of the narrated story. For this reason, the first-person narrator reveals a great deal about himself (or herself) during the personal narration segments. This type of narrator acts, not as a disembodied commentator, but as a person in his (or her) own right.

2. **The third-person narrator**. Like the first-person narrator, the third-person narrator introduces and closes the story and connects different places and times. The third-person narrator, however, usually fills the additional role of commentator, helping listeners to understand what is happening in the story and guiding their responses to it. In order not to compete with the personalities of the characters in the story, the third-person narrator usually reveals little personality.

In the following excerpt, the narrator comments on the events taking place in a nation. The narrator never uses the first person pronoun, "I," as the Doctor did in the previous example, and reveals nothing of his own personality.

EXAMPLE

1.   NARRATOR: There are times in the life of every nation when change is born. Those living at the time may not recognize the birth of the changes, but historians can trace the exact dates, places, and ways in which the changes began. In the nation of Brattville, for example, in the year 1912, something was happening; something that would change the nation and its people for ever. It started in a tiny village where two young men were talking...

2.   MUSIC. VILLAGE THEME MUSIC.

(Scene A followed, in which two young men discussed their concerns about work and food and talked of a dream of a different type of world where everyone had a small family, enough food, a good job and access to health services.)

23.   NARRATOR: And that's how the changes in Brattville began all those years ago. And look how far Brattville has come today. It is now one of the world's most powerful countries.

24.   Perhaps something similar is beginning in our nation even now, in small villages all across the country. Village workshops are being held everywhere, village workshops that are showing people how they can run their own small businesses. Is it possible that this is the beginning of a bigger change? The change to a nation that no longer knows poverty?

(Scene B followed, in which community members at a village workshop talk about much the same subjects as those discussed by the two young men in Scene A.)

3.   **The descriptive narrator**. Writers turn to a descriptive narrator when they cannot find any other way to "fill in the blanks." The narrator might indicate a change in setting, for example, by announcing at the end of a scene, "Meanwhile, at the home of Ben and Belle, there is an argument taking place." The drama then shifts to the scene with Ben and Belle. A descriptive narrator also might explain the passage of time by remarking, "It is now three weeks later, and we find the people of the township still discussing their need for a clinic. There is a meeting taking place at the town center."

Descriptive narration should be avoided in a serial because it slows down the action and detracts from the reality of the story. It is always better to indicate changes in place and time through dialogue, as is discussed and demonstrated in Chapter 6.

The Use of a Host

The **host** of a radio program guides the listeners, advising them what will happen in the next segment of the program and—where necessary telling them how to respond to what they hear. Distance education programs commonly employ a host, who often is referred to as the tutor or instructor and has an important role to play.

The major difference between a narrator and host is that the host interacts with and relates directly to the audience, while the narrator tells the audience about the drama but does not interact with them.

The host of the Nepali distance education series, Service Brings Reward, opens the program by reminding the audience of the topic of the program. The host, who is named Binod, also reminds them that there will be questions for them when the scene from the drama ends.

EXAMPLE

5

1. BINOD: Dear Health Worker friends, I hope you are all ready to listen to today's program. Perhaps you already know what it will be about. In our last two programs, we discussed the use of breast feeding as a contraceptive method. So today we will review the facts we discussed earlier. Before that, however, let's go to the chautari (meeting place) in the village of Pipaltar, where many people have gathered. Nare Uncle is there and Ram Krishna Chaudary, Hari, Mangale, and many other villagers. It is now some time since Ram Krishna Chaudary came to be the new Health Post In Charge for Pipaltar and since he has been here many people have come to him for advice, even those who never used to come to the Health Post.

    Let's listen carefully to the village meeting, and then you and I will have some questions and discuss some of the ideas we hear.

2. MUSIC. VILLAGE MUSIC: 05. FADE UNDER AND OUT.

Later in the episode, after the dramatic presentation of the village meeting, Binod addresses the audience again in an interactive session. He asks questions, and the listening audience is invited to give immediate oral answers based on what they heard in the drama. (More information on interactive questioning can be found in Chapter 9.)

A good writer always gives the host some personal characteristics that the listeners come to know and expect. The writer handles the development and revelation of the personality of the host in the same way as the personalities of other characters. The only difference is that the writer reveals just one or two major characteristics of the host—just enough for the host to become a real person to the listening audience—while the personality of the other characters is revealed as fully as possible.

In this opening scene from an Enter-Educate serial on family health, the host, Dana, reveals something of her own personality as she introduces the day's episode.

EXAMPLE

DANA: Ah, there you are, Field Worker friends. I've been waiting all the week for this time to come around again. It's my favorite time of the week, when we can be together and share ideas and experiences about our life as Field Workers. I wonder if you sometimes feel rather isolated on your job as I do. Sometimes, I just seem to have so much to do and no one to share with. Oh, my husband, Don, is wonderful. He'll listen to me very patiently if I've had a particularly hard day, and I'm grateful that I can discuss things with him.... But it's not quite the same as talking things over with another Field Worker. That's why I look forward to our times together...when we can talk about things like treating children who have diarrhea.

Chapter Summary

- Characters are essential to every drama; they carry out the action and reveal the dramatic conflict and emotions that attract and hold the audience.

- Writers should develop characters who are realistic, appropriate to the message and the audience, varied, limited in number, and of a suitable age for radio production purposes.

- The characters selected for a particular radio serial depend on the message to be disseminated and can be determined largely by the event list drawn up during plot development.

- Writers can choose from a wide range of characters, including heroes and heroines, villains, comics, advocates, and role models.

- Writers should remember, when creating characters to attract and hold the audience, that listeners often are drawn more to villains than heroes.

- The major characters in the drama need to be fully developed—including an understanding of their predominant personality traits—before script writing begins.

- Detailed profiles should be drawn up before script writing begins, so that each character can be presented accurately and consistently throughout the serial.

- Characters reveal their true natures in four ways: in what they say, what they do, what others say about them, and how they react to given situations.

- Writers should understand how to use non-characters, notably the narrator and the host, effectively in radio dramas.

5

Chapter Six

Developing the Setting

Every detail of the setting must be conveyed through dialog and sound effects.

Learning Objectives

■ To appreciate that setting—time and place—is just as important in radio drama as it is in television or film.

■ To understand how to indicate time (hours, months, seasons) naturally through dialogue.

■ To recognize the importance of maintaining real time within scenes and of avoiding flashbacks.

■ To understand how a detailed location map helps maintain reality and consistency within a drama.

■ To know how to convey details of the setting to the listening audience.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, determine how much time will pass between the first and last episodes of the serial you have developed. Be sure that this allows enough time for all the events in your event list to take place naturally and logically.

Draw the main settings for each of the plots, and write a detailed description of each one. Create maps of the main areas where the action will take place.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The importance of setting**

❖ **Establishing time through dialogue and sound effects**

❖ **Maintaining real time**

❖ **Use of flashbacks**

❖ **Establishing a drama's location**

❖ **Sketching the setting**

❖ **Creating a location map**

❖ **Conveying location to the radio audience**

The Importance of Setting

The word "setting" refers both to time and place. The radio audience has a better chance of imagining themselves part of the action if they know both when and where the action is occurring.

Establishing Time through Dialogue and Sound Effects

Time can refer to the hour, day, month, season, year, or even to an era of history. Establishing the hour or the day is relatively easy on radio, since a character can make a passing reference to the time in the course of normal conversation. A character might say, for instance, "Good morning, neighbor. Looks as if it will be a hot day, judging by that sunrise." Some other examples might be: "Hello, Joe. Did you have a good weekend?" or "So ends another week. Man, am I glad tomorrow is the weekend."

When dramas are set in rural areas, sound effects also can help establish the time. The natural sounds of insects and birds mark day and night. The sound of a rooster crowing, for example, is a universal signal of early morning, while in some areas the sounds of crickets or other insects indicate that it is evening. In some parts of the world, church or temple bells or the sounds of prayer can be clear indicators of the time of day.

Seasons can be suggested by passing references to the weather, crops, festivals, holy days, or school vacations. Sound effects and seasonal music also can help establish the time of year.

In most radio scripts, it is not necessary or even wise to establish the seasonal time too precisely, however, unless it is of immediate relevance to the script. Once a script has indicated a precise time, the writer must be careful to remain faithful to that time in the remainder of the episode and perhaps in future episodes as well.

Maintaining Real Time

Maintaining real time in a serial drama has two meanings, the first referring to the passage of time over the course of the entire serial and the second to the passage of time within an individual episode. The writer should maintain a balanced time spread from the time the story starts to the time it ends. A common error when writers fail to prepare a full treatment in advance is to speed up the story towards the end of the serial, making extraordinary leaps in time between episodes. Far too many serials start out slowly, allowing, for example, four or five episodes to go by between the time a woman is taken to the hospital and the time she gives birth to her baby. Suddenly, about two-thirds of the way through the serial, the writer finds that time is running out and must leave gaps of three, six, or even twelve months between one episode and the next in order to bring the story to its planned conclusion. This is careless writing and leaves listeners feeling that they have missed something or that the radio station has failed to broadcast all the episodes. The rule is that if the serial is to last a year, then the action within it also should last a year. There are exceptions to this maintenance of real time from the first to last episode, of course, but such exceptions must be handled carefully and should occur infrequently.

It is also important to maintain real time within an individual episode. Real time means that, within any particular scene or episode, the listeners have the sense that they are present for the whole of the story or that they are well aware of how and why additional time has passed.

The following scene shows the confusion created when real time is ignored.

6

EXAMPLE

1. FX. SOUND OF DOOR OPENING.

2. DR: Good morning, Mother Jeno. Please come in. I am happy to see you this morning.

3. JENO: Good morning, Doctor. I am sorry to bother you. I shall take up only a few minutes of your time. I hate to be a bother to you.

4. DR: (PATIENTLY). My time is your time, Mother Jeno. What can I do to help you?

5. JENO: It's not me, it's my baby. He throws up all the time. That's why I didn't bring him with me. I was afraid he would throw up in here and mess everything up. But my sister is bringing him. She will be here any minute now.

6. DR: That's good, Mother Jeno. I think it would be better if I could see him. Then I can examine him and see what the problem is.

7. JENO: Yes, Doctor. Shall I see if she is here yet?

8. DR: Yes, do. You and I have been sitting here talking for thirty minutes. She surely should be here by now.

9. JENO: I'll look.

10. FX. DOOR OPENS. CLOSES.

Listeners realize that nowhere near thirty minutes has elapsed from the time the door opened at the start of the scene until the time Mother Jeno went to see if her sister had arrived. They are left wondering if part of the script was not recorded or if they missed something by not paying attention.

There are simple devices, however, that can indicate the passage of time within an episode or scene and that feel comfortable and natural to the listeners.

The following script makes a simple adjustment to the scene above. Time—even a fairly long period of time—can pass between one episode and the next and still be explained to the audience in a few simple remarks by one of the characters at the opening of the scene.

EXAMPLE

1. FX. SOUND OF DOOR OPENING.

2. DR: Good morning, Mother Jeno. Please come in. I am happy to see you this morning.

3. JENO: Good morning, Doctor. I am sorry to bother you. I shall take up only a few minutes of your time. I hate to be a bother to you.

4. DR: (PATIENTLY). My time is your time, Mother Jeno. What can I do to help you?

5. JENO: It's not me, it's my baby. He throws up all the time. That's why I didn't bring him with me. I was afraid he would throw up in here and mess everything up. But my sister is bringing him. She will be here any minute now.

6. DR: That's good, Mother Jeno. I think it would be better if I could see him. Then I can examine him and see what the problem is.

7. JENO: Yes, Doctor. Shall I see if she is here yet?

8. DR: Yes, do. In the meantime, I shall go into the next room to see one of my other patients. Please knock on the door when your sister arrives with the baby.

9. JENO: (RISING AND GOING OUT) Thank you, Doctor.

10. *PAUSE: 05 (MUSIC could be used here, if preferred.)*

11. <u>FX. GENTLE KNOCKING ON DOOR.</u>

Time—even a fairly long period of time—can pass between one episode and the next and still be explained to the audience in a few simple remarks by one of the characters at the opening of the scene.

EXAMPLE

2. DOCTOR: Hello, Mrs. Green. You're looking well, but I can't believe it's already a month since I saw you last. I hope everything is going well.

3. MRS. G: Just fine, thank you, Doctor. Time may be passing quickly for you, but I feel as if I've been pregnant forever. I hope the next four months don't go as slowly as the last one has.

The Use of Flashbacks

A **flashback** is a dramatic device in which an earlier event is inserted into present time.

EXAMPLE

5. AIDA: I shall be back later, Mama. I am going to a meeting at the clinic now.

6. MOTHER: Clinic? What is this clinic? I never went to a clinic when I had babies.

7. AIDA: That's true, Mama. But things are different now. When you were a young woman living in the village there was no clinic nearby.

8. MOTHER: And we managed perfectly well without it, thank you. Why, I can remember, when you were born, (FADING OFF MICROPHONE) my sister came...

9. FX. ECHO SOUND INDICATING FLASHBACK.

10. MOTHER: (AS YOUNGER WOMAN) (BREATHING HEAVILY) ...I think it's nearly time for my baby to come.

11. SISTER: Lie still, now. We must put some green camphor leaves on your belly to make sure the baby stays the right way round. Then I shall get the midwife.

12. MOTHER: (GROANING) Oh...this is so painful. I do hope everything is all right?

13. SISTER: Of course it is. Let me put these charms around you neck. Then I must go.
  And so the scene went on for two minutes, as the Mother discussed how she was treated during childbirth. Then the scene continued...

30. FX. ECHO SOUND. COMING OUT OF FLASHBACK.

31. MOTHER: And look at you today...And look at me. We're both as healthy as can be...so, where's the need for all these clinics?

As a rule, writers should avoid flashbacks, because they may confuse listeners who are not accustomed to them or who have not been following the story regularly. A good writer can weave in necessary information simply and naturally without having to include a flashback. Instead of the flashback, one of the characters can refer to the past event in a short speech. In the scene above, for example, Mother could have described her pregnancy to her daughter in present time, without a flashback.

Establishing a Drama's Location

Establishing the place where a radio drama occurs often is more important than establishing the time. Because radio is not a visual medium, it may be

tempting to think that graphic details of a scene's location are of no great importance. In fact, the opposite is true. If the audience is to believe in the serial as an expression of real life, they must be able to visualize clearly the surroundings in which the characters live and work.

The writer should strive to create settings that are:

1. **Familiar to the audience** or that can be made familiar. A rural audience, for example, generally would be more comfortable with a drama set in a small village than one set in a big city business office. An unfamiliar setting, however, can be exciting and add interest to the story as long as the writer provides enough details to enable the audience to imagine it clearly.

2. **Suitable to the message**. Writers should choose locations that allow the message to be presented in a natural manner. Limiting a serial's settings to a farm and a school, for example, would not permit the drama to cover the content of a reproductive health message either appropriately or adequately. It would be essential to include a clinic or health post as one of the settings.

3. **Limited in number**. Listeners feel more comfortable if they are taken to the same familiar settings on a regular basis rather than moved from one new location to another frequently. Just as in real life, listeners may enjoy visits to exotic places, but they want to return to those familiar places in which they feel most comfortable.

4. **Standard for each plot**. It is easier for listeners to recognize where a scene is taking place if each plot has an established, standard setting. The standard setting for the main plot of a rural drama, for example, might be the dining room in a family home, while one of the sub-plots is routinely set in a farm yard and another in a local garage. Any of the plots occasionally could move to a different location if the story required it, but relying on the standard settings simplifies writing and makes the story coherent and believable to the audience.

5. **Identifiable by sound**. Each standard setting can have some brief sound that identifies it, so that listeners can recognize the location immediately without lengthy explanations in the dialogue or by a narrator. The sound of utensils being moved around and the crackling of a fire might identify a dining room, for example, while the sounds of animals might identify a farm yard, and the sounds of automobile engines, horns, and tools being dropped on the ground might identify a garage.

   The identifying sound effect can be used at the beginning of a scene to establish the setting, held under softly through the opening lines of dialogue, and then faded out. Sound effects can be made live in the studio (by dropping tools, for example), or they can be pre-recorded (animal and automobile noises, for example). (More information on the use of sound effects can be found in Chapter 7.)

Guidelines for Creating Location Settings

Location settings should be:

1. Familiar to the audience,
2. Suitable to the message,
3. Limited in number,
4. Standard for each plot, and
5. Identifiable by sound.

6

Sketching the Setting

For a television series, the settings (or "sets" as they are called for short) are drawn in detail by an artist so they can be built for filming. Even though radio settings will never be seen by the listeners' eyes, they also should be sketched. The drawings need not be as detailed as those for television, however, nor drawn by a professional artist. Writers can make their own simple sketches that locate various objects within the setting. The sketch helps the writer create references in the script that eventually build up a complete picture of the location in the listeners' minds.

If the interior of a room is a standard setting, for example, the writer should make a sketch like the one below that shows what is in the room and the relationship of various objects to one another. Most writers also like to keep written notes on the things that are in the room and what they look like.
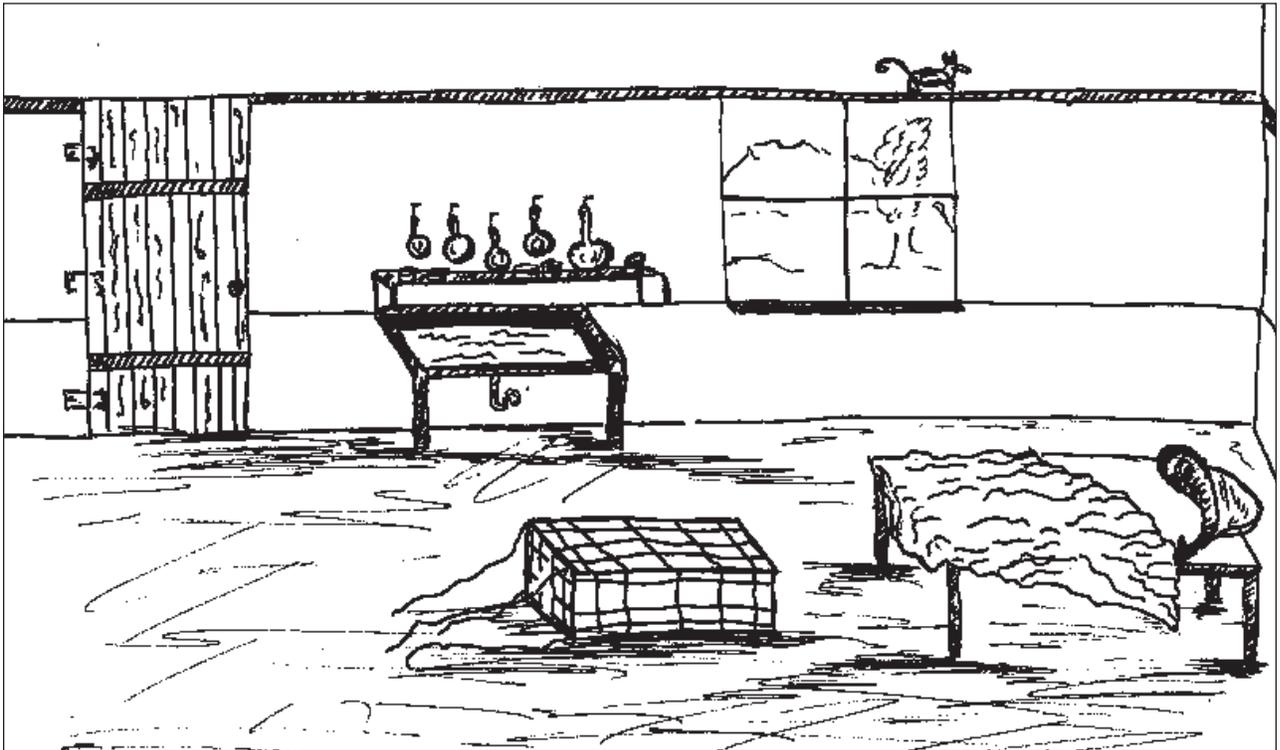
Drawn by Daniel Volz

Creating a Location Map

As well as sketching places that appear frequently in the serial, experienced writers also like to prepare maps of the villages or towns where main scenes are set. This helps them avoid inconsistencies in details such as how long it takes a character to travel from one place to another.

The following map shows the small village of Kyerewodo, where most of the action of the Ghanian Enter-Educate serial, *Family Affair,* took place.

Family Affair Master Story Line

The Village of Kyerewodo (pop. 2000)

Family Affair

1 Km
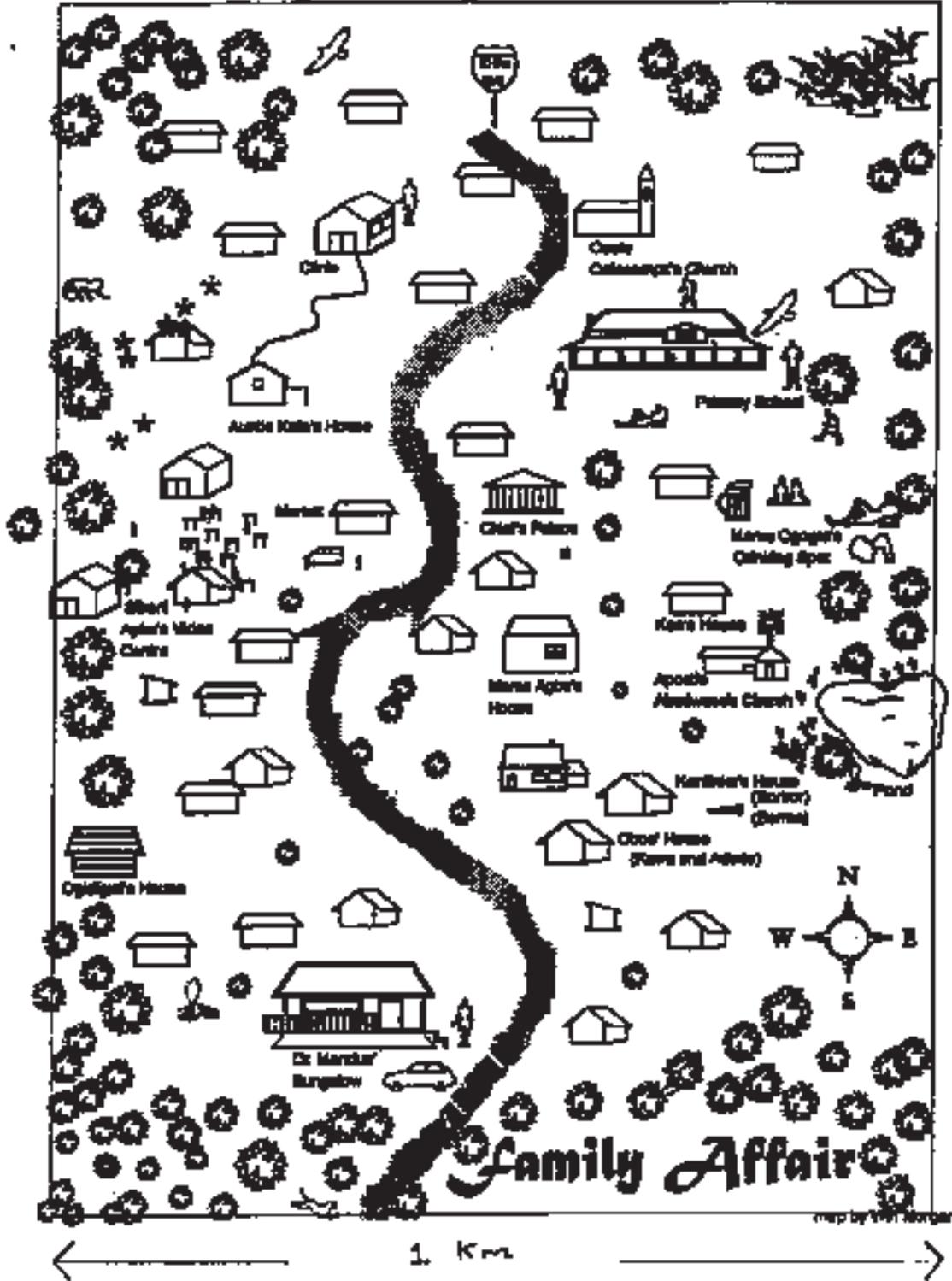
Based on the map, the writer can decide questions such as:

- How long would it take the main character, Ogidigi, to walk to the main road?
- Could people in the clinic hear a child in trouble in the pond?
- Could someone in the clinic hear a car going up the village road?
- Could someone creep up on Dr. Mandus's bungalow without being seen by anyone in the village?
- Could Auntie Katie see someone arriving at the clinic from her house?

Without the map and a clear understanding of the village layout, the writer easily could confuse the placement of the buildings in the village or contradict something from one episode to the next. When the writer is confused, so is the audience.

Sometimes one plot in a radio drama will be set in a location distant from the rest, even though characters from other plots may visit it. In such cases, the writer should keep a special set of notes on travel to and from the distant location. The writer should consider:

- How far away is the distant location from each of the others in the serial? (One kilometer or 100 kilometers?)

- What method of transport do the people in the story use to get to this place? (Bus, train, bicycle, or foot?) What does public transportation cost?

- Is travel ever restricted because of weather conditions? Is transport available on a restricted basis, only on Tuesdays, for example, or only when the local store owner drives his truck to town to collect supplies?

- How long does it take to get from this place to each of the others? (Hours, days, weeks?)

- Where do people stay when they visit this location?

- What sound(s) do people immediately hear on arriving in this place? (City traffic, farm animals, or bird song in the forest?)

- How does the geography, climate, social life, and economy of the distant location differ from those in other settings?

Conveying Location to the Radio Audience

While the writer can look at sketches and maps of the setting, the audience cannot. Graphic details of the settings must be conveyed to listeners through the medium of sound alone; this includes dialogue, sound effects, narration, and music.

Dialogue is the most reliable source of details about the setting. In fact, some settings, such as the room sketch on page 92, cannot be conveyed through sound effects or music. Here the writer must rely on dialogue, allowing the characters to reveal the picture of their surroundings as a natural part of their conversation.

The following 14 lines of dialogue open a scene located in the room sketched on page 92. (The term "line" in radio drama refers to the whole

speech or technical direction as indicated by the number in the left-hand margin.) In this scene, a health worker comes to visit a community member who has been ill, as part of a serial encouraging greater respect for visiting health workers and better use of their services. As well as moving the action of the story forward, the dialogue gives a clear description of where the client lives and what type of person he is. It also subtly introduces the beginnings of a message on family planning.

EXAMPLE

1. FX. KNOCK AT DOOR OFF.

2. MAN: (CALLING) Come in...(LOUDER) be careful of the door... (ON MICROPHONE) the stupid hinges are broken.

3. HW: Good morning, Mr Jones. I'm Sally...I've come to see how you are. And I've brought the medicines for you. Where shall I put them...on this ...er...table?

4. MAN: (GRUFFLY) That's not a table; it's a fish trap. Can't you smell it?

5. HW: Well, yes... So, where...

6. MAN: Over there...beside the sink.

7. HW: Right. (OFF SLIGHTLY) Um...there's something...what...where?

8. MAN: Don't tell me the cats have been up there again. What did they leave behind this time? Last week it was a frog—not even quite dead when they dropped it there. Okay, just bring the medicines here. I'll keep them under my pillow.

9. HW: (CLOSE. PERPLEXED) Your...what?

10. MAN: So, it's a pillow to me. It's really an old saddle, but you'd be surprised how comfortable it is if you beat it about a bit. I asked my daughter to bring me a new pillow...but...well, she's just too busy with all those children.

11. HW: How many does she have?

12. MAN: Four, I think. Doesn't know how to stop, obviously.

13. HW: Perhaps I can help her. I'd be happy to speak to her about it. But right now, I must take your temperature. Where can I wash my hands?

14. MAN: There's water in the sink. It's probably still clean.

In this scene, the description of the setting is woven into the dialogue so naturally that it does not delay the action. Brief snatches of the overall picture of the room are presented in the way that a first-time observer would see it. The listeners' imaginations can fill in other details and complete the picture for themselves.

Radio writers sometimes rely on sound effects to establish locations, for example, adding the sound of crashing waves and the call of sea birds to suggest the ocean or the noise of traffic to suggest a city street.

In the following scene, the chosen audience of Nepalese village people can easily visualize the rural wedding taking place as they hear the sounds associated with it. (The various script writing conventions used in this excerpt, such as "move in" and " hold under," are explained in Chapter 11.)

EXAMPLE

1. <u>FX. LOUD WEDDING MUSIC. START IN DISTANCE. MOVE IN.</u>

2. <u>MIX WITH WEDDING CROWD NOISES. HOLD MIXED EFFECTS UNDER.</u>

3. SHERSINGH: (FROM AFAR) The auspicious time is elapsing. We must start now. (COMING IN) Where is Dambar? At this rate it will be nightfall before we reach the bride's place.

4. SHYAM: (FROM AFAR. GIVING ORDERS) Carry the stretcher. Musicians, you go in front, please.

5. <u>FX. TRUMPET BLOWING. WEDDING MUSIC AND CROWDS SLOWLY MOVE AWAY AND FADE OUT. SILENCE.</u>

6. <u>FX. WEDDING POEMS RECITED QUIETLY IN THE BACKGROUND. FADE UNDER NEXT LINE.</u>

7. PUTALI: (COMING IN, QUIETLY) Beli, I have brought sister Health Worker. She has come from the bridegroom's place with the wedding procession. She would like to speak with you.

While sound effects, including music, can help create the picture of a setting in the listeners' minds, they must be used carefully and sparingly. An overload of noises can destroy a radio picture just as easily as appropriate sound can create it. (See Guidelines On the Use of Sound Effects in Chapter 7.)

Chapter Summary

■ Setting (both time and location) are just as important in radio drama as they are in television. Listeners must be able to visualize where the action is taking place.

■ Time can be established through dialogue and sound effects.

■ Each scene in a drama should take place in real time, with dialogue being used to indicate to listeners whenever time has passed between one scene and the next.

■ The use of flashbacks (going back in time within a scene) should be avoided, because they are difficult to write well and may confuse the audience.

■ Writers should create settings that are:

   Familiar to the audience;

   Suitable to the message;

   Limited in number;

   Standard for each plot; and

   Identifiable by sound, if possible.

■ Radio writers should make sketches of frequently used settings so that they can present them accurately and consistently.

■ Writers should make a map of each location in which a major scene occurs.

■ Dialogue and sound effects can help the audience visualize the locations where scenes take place.

6

Chapter Seven

Writing for the Ear
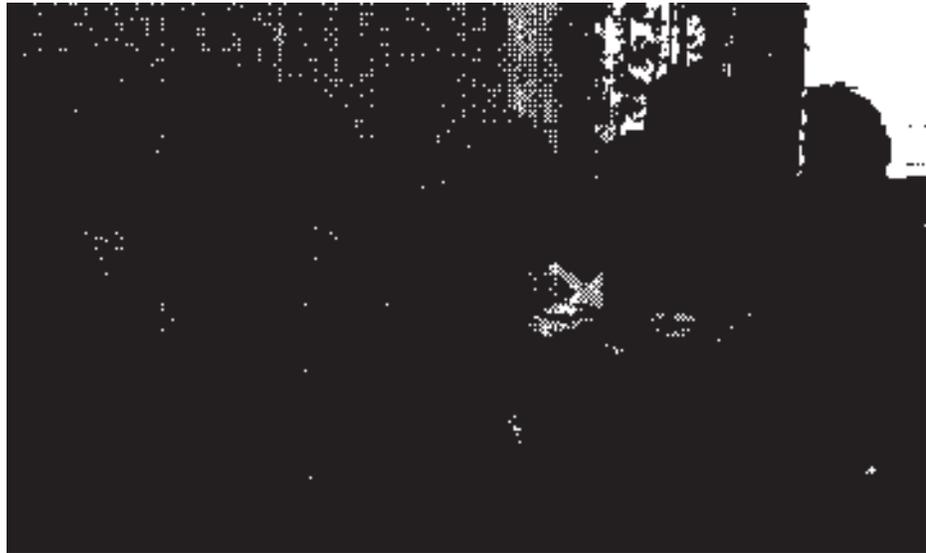
Writers should read scripts aloud to one another to be sure the dialogue sounds natural.

Learning Objectives

■ To appreciate that everything in a radio drama must be conveyed through the listener's ear.

■ To understand how to use dialogue effectively to convey action, dramatic conflict, character, setting, message, and emotion.

■ To be able to make appropriate use of word pictures, sound effects, and music within a radio drama.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, you will be ready to begin writing your script. This chapter can be used in conjunction with Chapter 8, which guides you in the creation of the early episodes of the serial.

The advice in this chapter should be kept beside you as you write, so that you can be sure that, at all times, you are reaching your listeners' minds, imaginations, and emotions through what they hear.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The golden rule of writing for radio**

❖ **Guidelines for the use of dialogue**

❖ **Creating word pictures:**

  Similes and metaphors
  Analogies
  Proverbs and sayings

❖ **Guidelines for the use of sound effects**

❖ **Guidelines for using music in radio drama**

The Golden Rule of Radio

The golden rule of writing for radio is to write everything for the listener's ear. Unless the listener can understand the setting, the characters, the action, and the message of a drama simply by listening to it, the drama will not succeed. Adherence to this golden rule requires that the writer strive for clarity and simplicity in every aspect of the serial. Simplicity, however, should not be misunderstood. It is the illusion of simplicity for which the radio writer strives. In fact, writing a successful radio drama calls for close attention to many details—simultaneously—in order for the audience to understand what they are hearing.

Since radio drama is delivered by sound alone, particular attention must be paid to dialogue, sound effects, and music. In a well written radio drama, all three of these elements work together harmoniously. None should predominate; they all should fit together to create a complete picture in the imaginations of the listeners.

Guidelines for the Use of Dialogue

Enter-Educate radio dramas rely on words to keep the audience informed of the:

• **Action** taking place, together with the dramatic conflict that arises from the action;

• **Place and time** in which the action is occurring;

• **People** involved in the action and how they either cause it or react to it;

• **Emotion** being evoked; and

• **Message**.

Most of the words in a radio drama take the form of dialogue, that is, conversation between two or more people. Writing convincing dialogue, therefore, is one of the writer's most essential skills. The following guidelines can help a writer prepare convincing dialogue:

1. **Dialogue should be fully scripted.** In a drama written strictly for entertainment, radio actors sometimes ad lib some of their lines—that is, they change the words in the script into language that they find easier to say or that they believe is more appropriate to the characters they are portraying. In Enter-Educate dramas, ad libbing can cause real problems: Even a small change in wording can confuse the meaning of a message or make information inaccurate. For this reason, the writer should take care to script all dialogue exactly as the actors should present it.

   In some countries, it is difficult to find actors who are sufficiently literate to read scripts accurately and convincingly. In such a case, it is better to have the actors learn their lines ahead of the recording date, rather than have them ad lib or make up lines as they go along.

   Even in Enter-Educate drama, however, there are a few occasions where ad libbing can be permitted, but these should be handled carefully.

> ## Guidelines for Writing Dialogue
>
> 1. Dialogue should be fully scripted.
>
> 2. Dialogue should be natural.
>
> 3. Suit the dialogue to the character's personality.
>
> 4. Pace the dialogue to suit the action.
>
> 5. Use names often.
>
> 6. Avoid use of soliloquy.

EXAMPLE

5. FATHER: And it is with great pride that I ask you all to join me in congratulating my daughter on becoming the first person in our family to graduate from high school.

6. AD LIB. EVERYONE CHEERING. MAKING CONGRATULATORY `
    REMARKS. CLAPPING. ETC.

Line 6 asks for everyone in the cast to ad lib general noise and comments of congratulation. This is safe, because the comments will not be related to the drama's message. It is the writer's responsibility, however, to ensure that all lines of actual dialogue are fully scripted.

2. **Dialogue should be natural.** The most important consideration in creating natural dialogue is that it should reflect the speaking habits of the audience for whom it is intended. In many parts of the world, everyday conversation is not expressed in full and grammatically correct sentences. Rather, people use incomplete sentences and interrupt one another. Radio dialogue should be so natural that listeners believe they are listening in on a real conversation.

The following dialogue is completely unnatural. The speeches sound more like lectures than normal conversation, the sentences are long and formal, and there is no sense of spontaneity in the language.

EXAMPLE

1. MOTHER: My daughter went to the clinic today, and the health worker told her all about the advantages and disadvantages of this Norplant® implant that so many people have been talking about. She said that the advantages are that it is very effective; that it works for up to five years; that it works immediately after insertion; that it can be used by breast feeding women; and that you can get pregnant right after you stop using it. Doesn't that sound like something that you would like to use, Maggie?

2. MAGGIE: It does sound interesting, but perhaps you would be good enough to tell me a little more about it. I would really like to know more about it before I decide.

In the next piece of dialogue, the same two characters present the same information, but they converse naturally. They interrupt each other, and their thoughts are expressed in fragments rather than in formal sentences. Note the use of ellipses (a series of full stops or periods) to indicate to the actor that the speech should be read as a series of disjointed statements, rather than as a single cohesive sentence. Ellipses also are used at the end of a speech to indicate that the next character interrupts before the speech is complete, as can be seen in line 5 below.

EXAMPLE

1. MOTHER: My daughter went to the clinic today, Maggie. She's been saying for ages that she wanted to find out about this Norplant thing... I was...

2. MAGGIE: Norplant implant I think it's called, sister.

3. MOTHER: Right. Some of her friends have had it put in their arm... Jenny... of course... had to find out about it. I mean, she's a follower... we know that. She says there are lots of good things about this Norplant... what did you say... implant.

4. MAGGIE: (SCORNFULLY) Such as?

5. MOTHER: I can't remember everything... the health worker said it works very well... works for up to five years... That sounds pretty good....

6. MAGGIE: Maybe, sister, maybe.

7. MOTHER: (GOING RIGHT ON) And... oh, yes... she said it works right away... not like some of those things that you have to ... um... stay away from your husband for a few weeks before they work. You know what I mean.

8. MAGGIE: No sex, you mean... So it works right away. But, what about when you WANT to get pregnant. I'll bet you have to wait six months after the thing's been removed.

9. MOTHER: No... no, I remember that... Um... Jenny said you can get pregnant quite soon after having it removed. So, what do you think Maggie... sound like something you could use?

10. MAGGIE: I don't know... maybe.

Not only does this dialogue sound more natural to the culture for which it was written, it also allows the audience to absorb the information more slowly and reveals something of the personality of the characters.

3. **Suit the dialogue to the character**. The style and tone of the dialogue must be changed to suit the personality of each character. While the actors employ appropriate accents for different characters, it is the writer's responsibility to create dialogue that reveals the true nature of each character. A highly-educated, professional city dweller, for example, is more likely than a rural person with little formal education to use sophisticated language, including scientific terminology for medical and technical matters.

    Even when characters come from similar backgrounds, they are apt to have individual speech patterns and idiosyncrasies that express their personalities. The capable writer uses dialogue artfully to assist in the depiction of character.

4. **Pace the dialogue to suit the action**. The characters' dialogue must be paced to fit the action of the drama. Two people chatting over a cup of tea speak in a more leisurely way and use longer sentences than do people who have just discovered that their house is on fire. The listeners feel the mood of a scene through the pace of the dialogue.

The following scene starts off in one mood and shifts to another. The change in the pace of the dialogue, as well as the words used, triggers the emotional response of the audience.

7

EXAMPLE

1. JOE: (AS IF DROPPING INTO A CHAIR) Ahh, that feels good. There's nothing like it, Jill... sitting on your own porch at the end of the day, watching the sun go down.

2. JILL: It's a good life, John. We've worked hard, but we've been lucky... many things to be grateful for. If I had my life to live over again, I wouldn't change it.

3. JOE: No.... Could use a bit more free time, perhaps, but on the whole, no complaints. Now then, Jill my dear, can I pour you a nice cup of....

4. FX. TELEPHONE RINGS OFF. HOLD UNDER TILL JOE ANSWERS.

5. JILL: Why does it always ring when we're sitting down?

6. JOE: I'll get it. (GRUNTS AS HE GETS OUT OF CHAIR)

7. PAUSE (TELEPHONE IS STILL RINGING).

8. JOE: (OFF) Hello… Who… (SOUNDING DOUBTFUL) Oh yes, officer… what can I do? What? Oh, God, no…

9. JILL: What is it John? What's wrong?

10. JOE: (OFF) It can't be… but he… yes… yes, officer… yes, I'll come.

11. FX. TELEPHONE IS HUNG UP

12. JILL: (TERRIFIED) John… John… what's wrong?

END OF SCENE

That scene demonstrates an extreme change in pace and mood. Not all scenes will be as dramatic as that, but the pace of the dialogue should quicken whenever excitement rises in a scene. This is best accomplished with short speeches and quick interchanges.

5. **Use characters' names in dialogue**. The scene above also illustrates one slightly unnatural feature of radio drama dialogue: the characters use each other's names more often than they would in normal conversation. This helps the audience identify who is speaking to whom. The use of names is particularly important in the early episodes of a serial when the listeners have not yet grown accustomed to the voices of the actors who portray the characters.

6. **Avoid the use of soliloquy**. A soliloquy is a speech in which the character talks to himself or herself, in effect, thinking aloud. On radio, where the character cannot be seen, it is difficult to make a soliloquy sound convincing. It is almost always better to have the character speak his or her thoughts to someone or something else.

In the following scene, Bongani, who has just been jilted by the girl he loves, expresses his misery to his dog.

EXAMPLE

1. FX. DOOR CREAKS OPEN. CLOSES WITH A BANG.

2. BONGANI: (SIGHING) Hi, there, Jojo. What are you wagging your tail about?

3. FX. DOG PANTING, WHINING HAPPILY.

4. BONGANI: It's all very well for you. You can find a girl friend whenever you want one…you don't have to care if she loves you or not. But humans are different, Jojo. I can't believe she'd do that to me. I mean, we were going to be married and everything. I love her. I THOUGHT she loved me…I'll bet there's someone else.

5. FX. SLAPPING DOG ON NECK.

6. BONGANI: Yeah, but who? Hey, you know what, Jojo, maybe I'll go away somewhere…South Africa maybe. Then she'll be sorry…when I'm not here anymore.

ETC.

As this excerpt shows, characters can speak to animals or even plants to reveal their feelings. In countries where trees are thought to house spirits, it is natural for people to speak to the trees. Alternatively, a mother can speak her thoughts to her young baby, who cannot respond but who can be, quite naturally, the object of her mother's heart-felt outpourings.

Creating Word Pictures

Creating good radio dialogue requires the writer to think in pictures, to become the listeners' eyes, and to see the world as the listeners would see it if they were present at the scene. Throughout the entire serial, the writer reveals mental pictures of characters and settings subtly, almost coincidentally, as part of the dialogue. While it is essential for radio writers to create **word pictures** as part of the dialogue, however, this does not mean using the figures of speech and poetic style often encouraged by writing teachers. Radio drama must be written to reflect the way real people speak. Creating pictures in the minds of listeners is best accomplished with dialogue that refers to familiar sights and situations. For example, listeners will understand immediately when a character announces, "The wind was so strong it nearly blew me over." Employing an unfamiliar simile—"The wind was as strong as a turbo engine"—would only confuse matters.

Similes and Metaphors

The radio writer should be extremely careful about using similes and metaphors in dialogue to create pictures of people and places. A writer should employ only figures of speech that would be used naturally by the characters in the story. Similes are likely to be heard in everyday speech in many cultures, for example, "He's as strong as an ox," "She's as pretty as a flower," or "It's as hot as a furnace today." Unfamiliar expressions, however, no matter how beautifully written, will make the dialogue sound less realistic.

The following speech creates a vivid picture of the setting, but it is hardly the type of language the average person uses—although it might be used by a character who is a poet.

"Look, Thabo, we have arrived at a magnificent sweeping plain. It is an enormous magic carpet spread before my feet. Just as Adam must have felt on first beholding the Garden of Eden, so I feel as I view this plain."

Below is a more typical response to the sight of the plain, which uses the same simile, but combines it with excited exclamations:

"Wow, Thabo. Look at this plain. It's huge! It goes on forever. Wow. I feel like Adam discovering the Garden of Eden. It's magnificent."

This kind of word picture is more effective for radio drama than the figures of speech created by poets and novelists, because it employs language that the audience understands and that the characters in the drama would use naturally. The writer always should choose language that is suitable to the character and comfortable for the audience, not language that the writer finds personally attractive or that demonstrates his or her writing ability.

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Analogies

An analogy is a type of comparison that suggests that if two things are similar in some ways, they are likely to be similar in others. Analogies can be extremely helpful in explaining a new idea to a listening audience.

In the following scene from the Tanzanian radio drama, *Awake,* the health worker, Shada, uses an analogy to help Mama Jeni understand that some contraceptive users experience side effects and so need to be kept under observation.

EXAMPLE

1.	SHADA:	Oh, Mama Jeni, so it is already three months since your last injection. Let me see your card, please. O.K. March, April, May. It's all right. How is your body adopting this new method?
2.	JENI:	What do you mean adopting?
3.	SHADA:	You know human bodies are all naturally somehow different. Some want their tea with very sweet sugar, while others put in just very small amounts of sugar.
4.	JENI:	Yes, that's very common.
5.	SHADA:	Some people are irritated by medicines like chloroquine, while others aren't.
6.	JENI:	My husband always scratches himself after taking chloroquine. I don't.
7.	SHADA:	Because of such differences, it is good to monitor any new phenomenon in the body to see how well it is adopted.
8.	JENI:	That's right. My daughter is allergic to perfumed soaps. They cause rashes on her body.
9.	SHADA:	In the same sense, when people start using a certain modern family planning method, we make a follow up and monitor how the body has adopted the method.

Proverbs and Sayings

Yet another way to enrich the language of a radio drama and to create pictures in the minds of the listeners is to use local proverbs, expressions, or sayings. These expressions may not be familiar to people in other countries, but they add color and credibility for the local audience.

The following excerpt from the Australian agricultural radio serial, *Dad and Dave,* demonstrates that familiar expressions reflecting the norms of one culture may not be understood easily by another culture. It also shows how the use of local expressions can enrich the characterization and the story while providing evocative word pictures.

EXAMPLE

8.	DAD:	Well, look at you, Dave. You've grown into a long cold drink of water, you have. You're even taller than I am. (LAUGHING) You'll have to have a party in your shoes and invite your trousers down. What you up to these days?
9.	DAVE:	Not much. Can't get a job or nothing. Think I'll have to go on the dole.*
10.	DAD:	If you ask me, going on the dole's got long white woolly whiskers on it. No bloke who calls himself a man ever goes on the dole. That's for sissies, that is.
11.	DAVE:	That's all very well for you to say. You got the farm.
12.	DAVE:	So what? You think that means I can sit around all day petting ducky little lambs? The farm's like anything else. You got to work for it to make it work for you. Hard work never hurt nobody. Hard work works, I tell you. Hard work is guaranteed not to rip, tip, wear, tear, rust, bust or fall apart at the seams.

* The "dole" is the Australian word for "welfare."

Guidelines for the Use of Sound Effects

In real life, there are always sounds in the background. Most of them go unnoticed because they are a natural, everyday part of the surroundings and because other senses, such as sight, touch, and smell, often override sound. To be truly naturalistic, therefore, a radio serial would have to have non-stop sound going on under all the dialogue. This would be confusing and overwhelming, because on radio all sounds are noticed as listeners try, through just one sense—hearing—to pick up and process all incoming information. The good radio writer is careful and selective in the use of sound effects and avoids the temptation to over-use them.

The primary rule for the use of sound effects in radio serials is to avoid them unless they are absolutely essential. The following guidelines can help writers ensure that they use sound effects judiciously and effectively.

1. **Use only sounds that can be heard in real life.** The peel being removed from an orange, for instance, is not a sound that is normally picked up by the human ear, and it should never be requested as a sound effect in a radio serial. Similarly, footsteps are not heard nearly as much as the average radio writer would like to suggest. The footsteps of

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> ## Guidelines for the Use of Sound Effects
>
> 1. Use only sounds that are heard in real life.
>
> 2. Use sound beds sparingly.
>
> 3. Be sure sound effects are really needed.
>
> 4. Use simple sound effects for regular settings.
>
> 5. Avoid exotic sound effects like echoes and reverberations.

a barefoot person walking on earth generally make no sound at all. When a character comes into or goes out of the scene, it is much more realistic to have the actor move towards (FADE IN) or away from the microphone (FADE OUT) while speaking than to add the sound of footsteps.

EXAMPLE

1. PASCO: (FADE IN) Hey, Nongma...Nongma...Where are you? (ON MICROPHONE) Ah, there you are.

2. NONGMA: Pasco, my friend...What is it? What are you so excited about?

3. PASCO: (HAPPILY) They've arrived. They're here at last.

4. NONGMA: Who's here? What are you talking about, Pasco?

5. PASCO: The street actors...We've been hoping they'd come. And now they're here Nongma, and they're about to start their show.

6. NONGMA: Hey, that's great! (FADING OUT) Let's go and watch them.

7. PASCO: You bet...(FADING OUT) I'm coming. Wait for me.

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2. **Use sound beds sparingly**. A **sound bed** provides continuous sound throughout a scene. In a market scene, for example, the writer might call for a "Market Background Sound Bed" that would add noises typical of a market throughout the scene, such as trucks, people shouting, people buying and selling, and the like. Continuous background sound of this nature can be troublesome in serials, however, because of the frequent changes of scene. This can force the writer to call constantly for a "cross fade" from one sound effect to another or to use music to mark every break between one scene and the next. Such over-use of music to mark frequent scene breaks can be very distracting and can cause listeners to lose track of what is going on. Unless a continuous sound bed is an essential element of a particular scene, it is better to avoid it. A similar, but less complicating, effect can be achieved by establishing the sound briefly at the beginning of the scene and then gradually fading it down and out under the dialogue.

EXAMPLE

1. <u>FX. STREET MUSICIANS. UP :05. FADE UNDER GRADUALLY.</u>

2. NONGMA: (FADING IN) Here they are, Pasco. Come over here. We can see
   well from here.

3. PASCO: (FADING IN) Wow....look at those costumes. I think I'd like to be
   a street actor. What fun. Hey, this is great Nongma.
   Look, there's Don (CALLING) Don, Don...we're over here.
   How are you?

4. <u>FX. MUSIC OUT.</u>

5. DON: (FADING IN) I was hoping to find you two here. I haven't seen
   you for such a long time. So tell me what you're doing these days.

*(Conversation then continued among the three young people without the music in the
background)*

3. **Be sure sound effects are really needed**. The judicious use of sound
   effects can add richness and beauty to a radio serial. Their overuse can
   give the story the quality of a cheap commercial. The classic
   example, once again, is footsteps. The use of this sound effect
   should be reserved for those occasions when no other sound
   would naturally occur or when the sound of footsteps is of
   vital significance to the story. If a person in the drama is
   trapped in a locked closet, for example, the sound of
   approaching footsteps could be important, either signaling the
   possibility of release or intensifying the fear as the walker
   passes by.

4. **Use simple sound effects to establish a setting that is visited
   frequently**. In a radio serial, certain settings recur regularly. As
   described in Chapter 6, it is helpful to use a simple,
   unobtrusive sound each time a standard setting is used. This
   lets the audience know immediately where the action is taking
   place.

5. **Avoid exotic sound effects**, such as echos and reverberations.
   These may have a place in imaginative children's stories or
   horror shows, but rarely do they have a justifiable place in a
   real-life serial drama.

Guidelines for Using Music in Radio Drama

In the modern world, radio has become almost synonymous with
music. Radio is the single most important source of music for
millions of people the world over. Radio writers sometimes feel,
therefore, that any program designed for radio must include
generous amounts of music. This is not necessarily true of radio

Guidelines for the Use of Music

1. Always include a signature or theme tune at the beginning and end of each episode.

2. Bridge music between scenes should be used sparingly—perhaps only before and after major scenes.

3. Using a musician as a character is a good way of including music in a drama.

4. Avoid mood music, relying instead on dialogue to set the mood of a scene.

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serials. Indeed, music can be a distraction in a well-told story, and experienced radio serial writers tend to restrict the use of music to the following occasions:

1. **Signature tune** or **theme music** at the start and the close of each episode. A signature tune is like the cover of a well-loved book: instantly recognizable and immediately offering the promise of something enjoyable. Whether a well-known traditional melody[1] is used or, as is more common, a new piece is created especially for the serial, theme music should be appropriate to the culture of the audience. Signature music is short, typically lasting about ten seconds at the opening and no more than five seconds at the end of each episode. If music is being written especially for the serial, however, the musician should be commissioned to create a piece of at least five minutes duration. This allows for "fill in" music if an episode runs a little short and for the use of different segments of the theme music as bridge music.

2. **Bridge music** is used to mark the transition from one scene to another. Experienced serial writers use bridge music sparingly, preferring to make the transition from one scene to the next through the dialogue.

In this excerpt, the Mother's words at the end of one scene indicate quite clearly to the listeners where the next scene will be. A brief pause (comparable to the empty half page at the end of a book chapter) indicates that something new is about to take place. The setting for the next scene is confirmed by the sound effect.

EXAMPLE

11. MOTHER: This has been a terrible day, with so many awful things happening at once. I haven't given a thought to Jedda and her troubles. I wonder if she ever made it to the clinic.

12. PAUSE :05

13. <u>FX. CLINIC NOISES SOFTLY IN BACKGROUND. HOLD UNDER AND FADE OUT.</u>

14. NURSE: Who is next? Are you all right madam? You look very weak.

15. JEDDA: (FAINTLY) Yes, I'm okay…but I think…

16. NURSE: Let me look at you. Come in here, please. (FADING OUT) What is your name?

ETC.

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[1]   If an existing piece of modern music is chosen for use in a radio program, it is wise to obtain written permission to use it and so avoid paying royalties to the composer, the publisher, or the recording company.

Some serial writers—particularly those writing commercial soap opera—make no attempt to link scenes and rely on the listeners' detailed knowledge of the story to guide their understanding of who is talking and where the scene is set. For listeners who are new to radio serials, however, it is helpful to have some indication—preferably through the dialogue—that one scene is ending and another is beginning.

Bridge music is effective where there is a major scene shift, perhaps when there has been a lengthy passage of time in the story or when the action moves to a completely different location or scene in which none of the previously heard characters appear.

The first scene in the following excerpt involves characters and a setting that are already well-known to the audience: a citizen group that is working to establish a clinic in the community. The second scene, however, is something new; it shows a meeting of the executives of a supermarket chain who have not appeared previously in the drama. The juxtaposition of these two scenes, moreover, is highly dramatic, and the use of transition music indicates that the second scene is of major importance.

EXAMPLE

18. JENNY: So, everything is all right now. The committee is in agreement that the new clinic will be established in the old building beside the police station. We will submit our plans to the Ministry of Health, and then we can look forward—at last—to our own magnificent clinic.

19. <u>MUSIC. TRANSITION MUSIC :05. CUT.</u>

20. MR GRAY: All right. This is the contract for our new supermarket. It looks good.

21. MR BLACK: More than good. It's going to be great. Right there, next to the police station. That's the best location in town. Everybody will stop there to buy their groceries, their meat...everything.

22. MISS NELL: You were so smart to buy that property when you did, Mr. Gray. I understand that there are lots of people interested in it.

23. MR BLACK: Including a community group, who wanted it for a clinic.

24. MISS NELL: Well, they're out of luck. It's our property now, and there's nothing they can do about it.

25. <u>MUSIC. TRANSITION MUSIC :05. CUT.</u>

3. **Natural music** is effective when it is used the same way as in real life, at a dance hall or party, for example, or in a scene with someone listening to the radio. Another way to introduce music into an Enter-Educate serial is to have a musician as one of the regular characters. The musician can introduce songs—traditional or newly created—that refer in some way to the message being disseminated. Songs set to attractive, culturally acceptable music are easily remembered and can be a powerful way to remind the audience of the key points of an educational message. They are more successful, however, if they are introduced as a natural part of the story.

A musician named Nibaron is one of the main characters in the Bangladeshi drama, *Goi Geramer Goppo (Tale of a Village)*. His songs are woven into the story.

EXAMPLE

1. NIBARON: Who is it?

2. QUDDUS: It is I. It is Quddus. I have come to you with a request, Nibaron, for a concert.

3. NIBARON: When is the programme?

4. QUDDUS: After the birth of my child.

5. NIBARON: (LAUGHS)

6. QUDDUS: Nibaron bhai, don't laugh. You are such a busy man. That's why I am telling you beforehand.

7. NIBARON: Of course I will sing.

8. QUDDUS: Give some advice to the people through your song.

9. NIBARON: What kind of advice?

10. QUDDUS: Oh..advice about pregnancy and child care.

11. NIBARON: (LAUGHS) I don't know anything about such matters.

12. QUDDUS: But I do. I learned from the doctor. For example, a pregnant mother should have nutritious foods like milk, eggs, fruit....

13. NIBARON: (STARTS SINGING...TRYING OUT AN IDEA)

Listen to what Nibaron says:

Do the following things

When a woman is pregnant.

Provide her with nutritious food...

Like eggs, milk, fruit.

14. QUDDUS: That's great. I like it... Go on... go on.

ETC.

4. **Mood music**. Some writers like to use mood music to help put the audience into an appropriate emotional frame of mind for a particular scene. Mood music must be handled extremely carefully. Modern films and television soap operas use music almost continuously in the background, and it is tempting to think that it would be equally effective on radio. This is not necessarily true. Television engages two of the senses, hearing and vision, while radio engages only one, hearing. A television audience can view the action, while hearing the music as background. A radio audience, in contrast, must concentrate on hearing the action through the dialogue. Bringing in a second layer of sound— namely music—can be very distracting. Radio writers should remember that "silence, not music, is the proper background of speech, and second only to speech itself, [silence] is the finest of dramatic effects" (Bentley, 1968).

   Mood music can be used, sparingly, at the opening of a scene, but most experienced radio writers prefer to depend on powerful dialogue to set the emotional tone. Dramatic music all too easily can add a sense of melodrama to a radio serial. While melodrama is certainly entertaining, its exaggerated presentation of life is not necessarily believable. Enter-Educate dramas are successful because they offer, in a somewhat heightened but not over-exaggerated form, a portrait of real life.

Additional trappings, like bridge music or mood music, frequently add little but production costs to a radio drama. The focus of a serial is on the story, and a writer who can produce a gripping story need not be overly concerned with music. If including music is believed to be a necessity in a particular culture, it is best either to create a character who is a musician or to add a separate musical interlude halfway through the episode.

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Chapter Summary

- The golden rule of radio is to write everything for the ear.

- Dialogue is used to convey action, setting, personality, message, and emotion.

- To be effective, dialogue should be fully scripted, natural, suited to the character, and paced to fit the action.

- Names should be used more often than in daily life.

- The use of soliloquy should be avoided because it tends to destroy a drama's sense of reality.

- Word pictures are important in assisting the audience to "see" settings, characters, and actions, but figures of speech should be used cautiously.

- Similes and metaphors can be used if they fit the speaker's character.

- Analogies can help the audience understand the message.

- Local proverbs and sayings can help the audience see the drama as relevant to their lives.

- Sound effects are an important component of radio dramas but must be used judiciously and sparingly.

- Music cannot be used in radio drama as freely as it is in television, because it tends to interfere with the audience's ability to observe action through words.

- Having a musician as one of the characters is an effective way to add music to a drama in a natural manner.

Chapter Eight

Scene Development
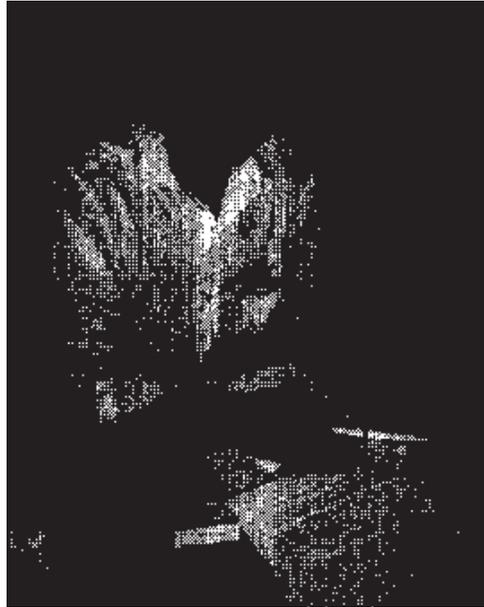
A writer works through the Event List and the Plot Treatment to determine how the scenes in each episode will fit together.

Learning Objectives

■ To understand how to introduce the various plots gradually at the beginning of the serial.

■ To be able to prepare an episode treatment.

■ To know how to prepare and use a plot chart to ensure consistency within and between episodes.

■ To understand how to apply the guidelines for scene development.

Exercise

After reading this chapter and reviewing the guidelines, create treatments for the opening four or five episodes of your serial. Write the dramatized versions of these episodes, bearing in mind all you have learned so far with regard to plot, scene, character, dramatic conflict, setting, and dialogue. If you wish to practice correct script layout at this stage, you can follow the guidelines in Chapter 11, Script Presentation. Check your episodes against the guidelines for scene development.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **Episode and scene divisions: The early episodes**

❖ **Episode treatments**

❖ **The plot chart**

❖ **Guidelines for development and use of scenes**

❖ **Weaving the elements of a scene together**

Episode and Scene Divisions: The Early Episodes

Many writers—particularly those who are new at Enter-Educate work—find it quite challenging to divide an episode into scenes that depict several plots simultaneously. It is easier for both the writer and the audience if each of the plots is introduced separately in the early episodes of a serial. For a serial broadcast weekly for six months or more, the following scheme would be an appropriate way to divide the episodes and to introduce the main plot and three sub-plots.

- Episodes 1 and 2:   All scenes relate to the main plot.

- Episodes 3 and 4:   Scene 1 = main plot

  Scene 2 = sub-plot A

  Scene 3 = main plot

  Scene 4 = sub-plot A

- Episodes 5 and 6:   Scene 1 = main plot

  Scene 2 = sub-plot B

  Scene 3 = sub-plot A

  Scene 4 = sub-plot B

- Episodes 7 and 8:   Scene 1 = main plot

  Scene 2 = sub-plot C

  Scene 3 = sub plot B

  Scene 4 = sub-plot C

From this point on, the plots can be mixed in any sequence, depending on the progress of the story. All four plots need not appear in every episode. Sometimes two plots can be used alternately to create four scenes.

Even when the writer feels confident in working with more than one plot from the outset, it is easier for the audience to understand the story if the various plots are introduced slowly, with two or, at most, three plots starting up in the same episode. It is also important, particularly in the early episodes, to link scenes together clearly so that the audience is not confused about what is happening. Even as the story moves from plot to sub-plot to sub-plot, the dialogue should give some indication of how each plot links with the others. (Information on linking scenes is contained later in this chapter.)

Episode Treatments

The writer should begin preparing each episode by checking the Writer's Brief and reviewing the message content that must be included. Then the writer can decide which plots to include in the episode and how many scenes are needed. Next, the writer assembles the episode treatment that specifies the scene divisions, the action, the setting, the personalities of the characters, the emotions to be stressed, and the point of suspense on which each scene and the episode itself will end.

The following treatment was written by a very experienced writer and shows how three plots were introduced at once in the opening episode of the serial, *Too Late, Too Bad*, which was discussed in Chapter 3. Sub-plot B, involving Hedda and Harry Jones, was not introduced to the story until several episodes later. Writers who feel ready to try introducing several plots at once might find this example helpful.

EXAMPLE

Too Late, Too Bad

Episode Treatment: Episode 1

Scene 1:

Establish feud between Stan and Twigg families. Steven Stan is in conversation with his wife in the living room of their home. He is angry and egotistical and complaining bitterly about Tony Twigg who has been trying to outsmart him over a land deal. Steven Stan maintains the land was given to the Stan family years ago and is therefore still his. His wife, Mary, tries to pacify him, reminding him that they have plenty of property and that his fight with the Twigg family has been going on too long. Mary does not like the Twiggs any more than Stan does, but wishes to find a way to live in peace. (Establish Mary as strong-minded, but a peace-maker.)

Closing Line: "I'll get even with Tony Twigg yet. You just watch me!"

Emotion: anger

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<div style="border:1px solid #000;padding:4px;background:#1a7a8a;color:#fff;display:inline-block;font-weight:bold">EXAMPLE</div>

Scene 2:

Establish situation that Carla is pregnant with twins and husband George is having trouble finding work as a builder. Establish his lack of self-confidence. Carla Brown is in the kitchen. She is pregnant and complains of difficulty in bending down to reach things in the low cupboard. She is making dinner for herself and George. He is tired and disgruntled. Carla is concerned about him. He explains that he has been looking for work all day, but that it seems no one in Sunville has need of a builder like him right now. He said he called on a big company, Stan Enterprises, and met the boss, Mr Stan himself. Mr Stan told him that he soon hoped to be reclaiming a large tract of land from someone called Twigg, and then he would have plenty of work for a first class builder. George, however, is sure that Mr Stan will not choose him for the job. He is very concerned that he must find a job before the twins are born. Carla is unable to find the words to comfort and reassure him.

Closing line: "If I don't have a job, Carla, I just don't know how we can afford these babies."

Emotions: anxiety; fear

Scene 3:

In Dr Moss's office. Establish characters of Dr. Moss and fact that Carla—without telling George—has contemplated an abortion. Carla is crying bitterly. Dr. Moss is attempting to comfort her. It becomes clear in their discussion that Carla is considering the possibility of aborting her twin babies because her husband is so upset about not being able to afford them. Dr. Moss reveals himself as a fatherly, kind person. He tells Carla there are still several months before the babies are born and that he is sure something will turn up for George soon. He advises Carla against going to work herself because her pregnancy is not stable. As Dr. Moss and Carla are conversing, Bob Jadd calls on the telephone. Dr. Moss assures him he can use his help in the morning.

Closing lines: Dr. Moss says to Carla, "That's a fine young man. You know, my dear, one day you'll be as proud of your children as Mr. and Mrs. Jadd are of theirs."

Emotions: kindness, reassurance

Scene 4:

Establish the Jadd family, their relationship to the Stan family, and their pride in their son, Bob. In the kitchen at the Stan home. Bob is speaking to his mother who is preparing dinner for the Stan family. He tells her that he will be working with Dr. Moss the next day—Saturday—so he wants to get his homework done tonight. He asks if he can make an early dinner for himself. His mother says she will make a light meal for him

since he is so busy. This is a very brief scene just to introduce the Jadd family and show Mrs Jadd's pride in her son.

Closing Lines: "Bob, you're working so hard. You deserve so many good things in life. I just hope that somehow God will make it possible for you to go to the university."

Emotion: pride

Scene 5 (Final scene):

Establish suspense for next episode. In the local pub. Steven Stan is having a beer with Dr. Moss. Everything seems happy and convivial. Steven is boasting about what a beautiful town Sunville is and how he and his family are proud to have been able to contribute so much to the growth of the town. Tony Twigg comes in and everybody greets him.

Closing Lines: Steven says, "Everything about Sunville is wonderful, except...THAT man. Mark my words, because of Tony Twigg and his family, dreadful things are going to happen in this town."

Emotions: fear; suspense

The Plot Chart

Even when working from detailed episode treatments, a writer may find that certain aspects of the story change slightly as the scripts are written. To keep track of the action and the time sequence, the writer should update a plot chart as each episode is written. The **plot chart**, which covers every episode in the script, indicates how much time has passed within or between episodes and notes in what episode a predicted event should occur.

The plot chart helps the writer adhere strictly to the time sequence of the story. Perhaps a character in episode 8 of a serial mentions that a baby will be born in three weeks, that is, episode 11 if the serial airs once a week. The writer lists the birth under episode 11 on the chart, so that it is not forgotten or included at the wrong time. The plot chart can be a simple affair containing brief notes that the writer can consult quickly and easily.

The following example shows just a portion of a full plot chart that covers all 26 episodes in a serial. The sample shows how the chart looked at the end of episode 16. The writer has noted the loss of Joe's cow in episode 15, so that she will not forget to have the cow found again in a future episode. She has also noted the predicted birth of Anna's baby and made an advance note under episode 19 to remind herself that the baby must be born in this episode. (The initials SP stand for sub-plot.)

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Episode 15	Episode 16	Episode 17	Episode 18	Episode 19
2 days covered in main plot.	1 day covered in main plot.			Anna's baby to be born in this episode.
Joe's prize cow lost. Reward offered. (SP. 3)	Birth of Anna's baby predicted for 3 weeks from now— episode 19. (SP.2)			

A radio serial, like a novel, needs to be consistent in every detail if the audience is to find it convincing. In order for an Enter-Educate serial to have a reasonable chance of success of bringing about positive social change, the writer must carefully design and then constantly monitor the story and the message to ensure that no errors or inconsistencies occur. Serial writers may devise their own methods to keep track of details, but the plot chart is one of the most effective.

Guidelines for the Development and Use of Scenes

The episode treatment for *Too Late, Too Bad*, above, illustrates some important points about scene development and use. While each scene advances the action of one particular plot, all the scenes within the episode work together to create a cohesive story. It is easier to accomplish this if each episode includes at least one scene that focuses on developing the story and has no message. Providing this kind of message relief also helps avoid clichéd stories.

The following guidelines can help the writer develop the scenes within an episode.

1. **Include at least four scenes** per twenty-minute episode. Five or even six are acceptable if the writer is comfortable with that many. More than four scenes are certainly appropriate if the episode is 30 minutes or longer.

    One episode can include two scenes from the same plot, and it is not necessary to include every plot in every episode. The arrangement of the scenes depends on what is happening in each plot, what part of the message is being covered, and the relationship of the particular plot to the development of the entire story.

	Episode 12	Episode 14	Episode 20
SCENE 1:	Main Plot	Main Plot	Sub-Plot B
SCENE 2:	Sub-Plot B	Sub-Plot B	Sub-Plot A
SCENE 3:	Main Plot	Sub-Plot A	Sub-Plot C
SCENE 4:	Sub-Plot B	Main Plot	Sub-Plot B

In various episodes of *Too Late, Too Bad*, the scenes were arranged as shown above.

2. **Establish the purpose of each scene**. Generally, the purpose will be one or two of the following:

- Furthering the action of the plot and presenting part of the message;

- Furthering the action or dramatic conflict of the plot without involving the message;

- Reviewing or repeating part of the message while advancing the action;

- Contributing some new action or complication to one of the plots;

- Demonstrating one of the Steps to Behavior Change (see Prologue); and

- Providing or explaining the link between the main plot and another sub-plot.

Guidelines for Scene Development

1. Allow 4 scenes per 20 minute episode.

2. Determine the purpose of the scene.

3. Open the scene with a hook.

4. Provide subtle links between scenes.

5. Advance the action and the dramatic conflict.

6. Keep the action simple.

7. Identify the emotion of the scene.

8. Pace the scene to increase momentum towards the end.

9. Maintain real time within the scene.

10. End the scene on a note of suspense.

8

EXAMPLE

1.   NARRATOR: As today's episode begins, we find the people of Thenga village gathered at the community hall for the long-awaited meeting about their new health clinic...but...there seems to be something wrong....

2.   <u>FX. NOISE OF PEOPLE AT MEETING...GETTING LOUDER.</u>

3.   BHATA: (CALLING LOUDLY) Wait...stop! This meeting can't go on...Not with THAT man present!

The narrator's comments attract the listeners' attention, and then the opening speech of the first scene hooks them. They want to know who "that man" is and why his presence should stop the meeting.

4.   **Create a subtle link** between one scene and the next. This link should be a suggestion, rather than a blatant or obvious reference to the next scene.

   For example: This scene from the Bangladeshi radio serial, *Goi Geramer Goppo (Tale of a Village)*, focuses on Shahar's stubborn refusal to listen to anyone else. In his outspoken retorts to the villager, however, he suggests the location of the next scene.

EXAMPLE

11. VILLAGER: Your wife is staying in someone else's house and you have brought home another wife....

12   SHAHAR: Oh, what do you know? There are many things you don't know.

13. VILLAGER: Because you don't share your personal problems with other people.

14. SHAHAR: So you think that is my fault?

15. VILLAGER: So, whose fault is it then?

16. SHAHAR: I've got other things to do. I have to get some groceries. I don't want to talk on this issue.

Scene 3

17. <u>FX. MARKET PLACE NOISES. HOLD UNDER AND FADE OUT.</u>

18. SHAHAR: How much is that nail polish?

19. SHOPKEEPER:
             Six taka.

20. SHAHAR: Such a small bottle for six taka.

ETC.

5. **Keep the action simple** in each scene. If the writer adheres to the rule of thumb that one 20-minute episode contains three or four scenes, then no scene will be more than six minutes long. Each scene, therefore, should move directly to the main point and deal with only one aspect of the story.

6. **Advance the action and the dramatic conflict**. Even a scene that emphasizes a serial's message should also advance the action and dramatic conflict of the plot.

   The following scene from the Ghanaian serial, *Family Affair*, stresses the importance of immunization, but at the same time develops the personal conflict Adodo faces as she tries to balance family life with making a living.

Family Affair	Page 1 of 2
Episode 9	Draft: Final
Writer: Fred Daramani	Date: August 1992

1. <u>FX. MARKET SOUNDS... HOLD UNDER.</u>

2. <u>FX. BABY CRYING. MIX WITH MARKET AND HOLD UNDER.</u>

3. ADODO: It's okay, my dear. Don't cry. Are you hungry? I'll feed you....There, my good boy.

4. <u>FX. BABY CRYING. FADE UNDER AND CUT.</u>

5. ADODO: (CALLING OUT TO CUSTOMERS) Latest! Latest! Latest shoes...dresses...blouses. Ladies, don't allow any woman to snatch your husband. Look modern. Look charming. Look elegant. Buy the latest. Perfume...earrings...lipstick.... Look beautiful. Look young. Look attractive. Let others envy you.

   Madam, come and make your choice. "Ahofee," these shoes will fit you. Come and have a look at them.

6. WOMAN: How much are the shoes?

7. ADODO: Only five thousand cedis.

8. WOMAN: Eh! Five thousand! Do they ensure one an automatic entry through the gates of heaven?

9. ADODO: They are pure leather. The latest.

10. WOMAN: I see. No reduction?

11. ADODO: How much will you pay for them?

12. WOMAN: Five hundred?

13. ADODO: Madam, you must have lost your way. I am not the one from whom you normally buy your stolen goods.

14. WOMAN: (ANGRILY) Who says I buy stolen goods?

8

Family Affair   Page 2 of 2
Episode 9   Draft: Final
Writer: Fred Daramani   Date: August 1992

15.	ADODO:	Who but a thief would want to buy such shoes for so low a price?
16.	WOMAN:	Look here, don't insult me. All I did was ask for a reduction. What's wrong in making such a request?
17.	ADODO:	I know you have no intention of buying. You only come to spy on me in order to inform your armed robber husband.
18.	WOMAN:	Woman, mind your tongue...or I'll have you locked up.
19.	ADODO:	Let's see you do it. Go and report me. I am prepared for anything.
20.	KAWE:	What is the matter, Adodo?
21.	WOMAN:	(CUTTING IN) My sister, just listen to this. All I did was ask for the reduction of the price of her shoes...nothing more. Is there anything wrong with that?
22.	ADODO:	She only came to make fun of me. How can you buy such expensive shoes for five hundred cedis? Just imagine that.
23.	WOMAN:	But what is....
24.	KAWE:	(CUTTING IN) Madam, if you think the shoes are not worth much, you go your way and she also keeps her shoes. I don't see the point in caroling.
25.	WOMAN:	Madam, I respect you. But for you, I would have mashed this witch into a ball of kenkey. Who knows...her things might be stolen things. Maybe I should go and report her to the police.
26.	ADODO:	Are you calling me a thief? Come back! Come back you coward! Devil!
27.	KAWE:	It's okay, Adodo. Allow her to go.
28.	ADODO:	If it hadn't been for you, I would have ground her like flour from the "nikanika."
29.	KAWE:	It's okay. Adodo, they are having immunization at the clinic today.
30.	ADODO:	Is that where you are going to?
31.	KAWE:	Yes, why don't you come along with me? You remember the last time you didn't send your baby....
32.	ADODO:	I don't think I can go today either. I have a whole lot of things on my hands.
33.	KAWE:	Adodo, that's what you always say. Don't you know that immunization is very important for your baby.
34.	ADODO:	Is it? Who will look after my wares if I go to the clinic?

7. **Identify the emotion** of each scene. One or two scenes in each episode should express a positive emotion, but perhaps not the opening or closing scenes. The opening scene needs to attract the audience with immediate action, and the closing scene should end on a note of suspense. In the episode treatment of *Too Late, Too Bad,* scenes 3 and 4 express positive emotions, while the others are more negative.

8. **Pace each scene** so that it gathers momentum towards the end. After attracting the attention of the listeners with a hook at the beginning, the scene can slow down and the dialogue proceed more deliberately. Individual speeches can be a little longer in the middle portion of a scene, and this is where any major message information should be conveyed. The dialogue should speed up at the end of the scene to heighten the action, the emotion, and the tension and to end the scene on a note of expectation or suspense.

9. **Keep the scene on real time**. Serial dramas proceed slowly, at the pace of real life. As much as possible, the action of each scene should occur within real time. In other words, if a scene lasts five minutes on the radio, then the characters should carry out only as much action as is possible in five minutes in real life. The use of real time encourages listeners to believe they are listening in on real life. (More information on indicating and controlling time in a serial can be found in Chapter 6.)

10. **End each scene on a note of suspense** or, at least, with an unanswered question. Leaving the action incomplete holds the audience's attention as they wait to find out what will happen next in that particular plot. A suspenseful ending at the end of an episode is sometimes called a cliffhanger, a term that originated in early adventure serial movies. These films frequently ended with a chase scene in which the hero, trying to escape the villain, slipped or tumbled over a cliff. There he would be left, literally hanging by his finger tips, as the episode ended. The audience would be forced to wait until the next episode to find out if the hero would fall or be rescued. Today, the word cliffhanger refers to any suspenseful ending.

8

EXAMPLE

18. MOTHER: (COMING IN, SCREAMING) My baby...my baby... Oh God...my baby.... Somebody's taken my baby. Help me!

19. <u>MUSIC. CLOSING SIGNATURE MUSIC UP :05 AND OUT.</u>

20. NARRATOR: And so ends today's episode of our story. We'll have to wait till next time to find out what has happened to the baby. Be sure you're listening.

Listeners have no idea who has taken the baby or even if the mother's emotional outburst is justified. They will have to wait for the next scene in this plot to find out what all the shouting is about.

Weaving the Elements of a Scene Together

The following scene, taken from the first episode of the Bangladeshi drama, *Goi Geramer Goppo (Tale of a Village)*, shows how the various elements of a scene are woven together. The scene involves Shahar, his first wife, Jaigun, and their 10-year-old daughter, Fuli. Shahar, a selfish, unpleasant man, blames Jaigun for not giving him a son. Moreover, he is feeling threatened by all the new ideas offered by the visiting health worker and overcome by the increasing costliness of his life. He has arranged to take his middle daughter, Fuli, to the city and put her into a job as a house maid—a decision of which the audience is aware from an earlier scene, but which is unknown to Jaigun and Fuli. Commentary in the right-hand column points out how well the scene follows the guidelines discussed above. (This script, like the others in this book, adheres to script presentation conventions that are described in detail in Chapter 11.)

Tale of a Village		Page 1 of 2
Episode #3		Draft: Final
Writer: Humayan Ahmed		Date: September 1992

1.	FX. NIGHT SOUNDS: CRICKETS. SHAHAR ALI SMOKING.		*Sound effects establish the scene.*
2.	JAIGUN:	(COMING IN. WORRIED) Our youngest daughter is sick. She has diarrhea.	*The news of a sick child "hooks" the attention of the audience.*
3.	SHAHAR:	So? That's nothing serious. In fact, it's good to have diarrhea sometimes. It gets the poisons out of the body.	
4.	JAIGUN:	(CAUTIOUSLY) Master Saheb told me that diarrhea is very dangerous.	
5.	SHAHAR:	Master Saheb doesn't know anything. Don't listen to him.	*The character of Shahar is made clear through his reaction to his wife's trust in the teacher.*
6.	JAIGUN:	What are you saying? He's an educated person.	*Tension begins to build between Shahar and Jaigun.*
7.	SHAHAR:	Let me tell you something. Most of these so-called educated people are very stupid. Do you know what this same Master Saheb told me once... he asked me why I have so many children. If I have lots of children, what's that to him?	*The major long speech comes in the middle of the scene.*
8.	JAIGUN:	Eight children means a lot of responsibility.	
9.	SHAHAR:	What do you think? Do you think that goats don't need food?	*Shahar continues to reveal his stubborn personality through his dialogue.*
10.		If someone tells us a goat has eight kids, we are happy. But when someone says a man has eight children, everyone turns pale. Now tell me, are human beings worse than goats?	
11.	JAIGUN:	Children need food. They need medical treatment.	
12.	SHAHAR:	Well, goats need treatment, too, sometimes.	
13.	JAIGUN:	Children need education.	
14.	SHAHAR:	I told you earlier that educated people are stupid, so don't try to tell me anything about education.	*The **action** of the scene is simple: disagreement between man and wife.*
15.	FX. BABY CRYING IN DISTANCE.		

8

16. SHAHAR:	Go and take care of that child. The noise is unbearable. I am going to take our middle daughter to Dhaka with me.	
17. JAIGUN:	(OFF A BIT. ALARMED) Why?	*The **pace** picks up towards the end of the scene, as Jaigun begins to suspect something.*
18. SHAHAR:	(OFF-HAND) She has never been to the city. I will take her to the zoo. She will see tigers, bears, many other....	*Listeners begin to experience **fear** on Fuli's behalf. They know what her father has in mind for her, and they earnestly wish she would say "No" to her father's request.*
19. JAIGUN:	(INTERRUPTING) You have never taken any of them anywhere, and now...	
20. SHAHAR:	Just because I haven't taken them before, doesn't mean I can't take them now. (CALLING) Fuli, where are you?	*The whole conversation occurs in **real** time.*
21. FULI:	(COMING IN) What is it, Father?	
22. SHAHAR:	Do you want to go to Dhaka with me?	
23. FULI:	(EXCITED) Yes, Father, I want to go.	

END OF SCENE.

Chapter Summary

■ For inexperienced writers and for listeners unaccustomed to radio serials, it is better to introduce the various plots gradually during the first eight to ten episodes.

■ Writers find it easier to create cohesive episodes containing several scenes if they create an episode treatment before writing each script.

■ Keeping a plot chart during the writing process helps maintain time and integrity as the serial moves forward.

■ When developing scenes, the writer should follow established guidelines with regard to:
  • the number of scenes in an episode and their purpose;
  • the use of a hook;
  • links between scenes;
  • advancing the dramatic conflict;
  • limiting the action;
  • establishing emotion;
  • pacing;
  • maintaining real time; and
  • using suspense or cliffhangers.

■ The best way to learn how to weave the various elements of a scene together effectively is to study a well-constructed example.

8

Chapter Nine

Interactivity and Enter-Educate Drama

Group listening can encourage audience members to interact with the radio drama and each other.

Learning Objectives

■ To understand the meaning of interactivity and recognize its importance in learning.

■ To know how to use interactivity within a serial episode (i.e., intra-program interactivity).

■ To know how to use various types of interactivity following the broadcast (i.e., post-program interactivity).

■ To understand how to use interactive questioning effectively.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, determine the best type of intra-program interactivity for your drama, remembering that this decision depends on whether it is a nontechnical or technical knowledge program.

For the sake of practice—even if you will not be using interactive segments regularly—create an interactive question and answer segment in your drama to follow one of the scenes that contains a message. Be sure to abide by the guidelines for interactive questions. Try out your interactive segment on a "sample audience" to see if they can answer correctly the questions based on the information presented in the drama.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **Interactivity and Enter-Educate drama**

❖ **Types of intra-program interactivity**

❖ **Guidelines for interactive questions**

❖ **Types of post-program interactivity**

Interactivity and Enter-Educate Drama

Radio programs designed to bring about social change are making increased use of interactivity. Interactivity refers to any interaction between the people in the radio program and the listeners. It is valuable because learners generally retain more when they interact with their instructors than when knowledge passes in only one direction, from instructor to learner. Interactivity is especially important in Enter-Educate programs because it gives listeners the chance to rehearse a desired behavior, mentally or sometimes even physically. This can help listeners develop confidence in their own ability to perform the behavior.

Interactivity has particular value for programs designed to provide technical knowledge to a distance education audience, such as rural health workers. Alternating interactive questioning segments with dramatic scenes allows the relevance of the information presented to be demonstrated. It also provides opportunities for listeners to check the accuracy of their learning. For programs with less rigorous objectives—for example, a motivational drama addressed to the general population—opportunities for immediate oral response are less necessary. Nevertheless, it is always valuable to give listeners a chance to interact with a program they enjoy.

Since radio is a one-way medium, the prospects for interactive learning may seem limited. There are several ways, however, for listeners to respond to a radio program and enhance their learning, either during the broadcast (**intra-program activity**) or afterwards (**post-program activity**). Indeed, the very nature of the Enter-Educate format is designed to encourage interactivity. Listeners who are hooked on a story constantly interact with the drama on a mental level. They become emotionally involved with the story, worrying about the characters and thinking about what they should do. Interactive listening also prompts them to think about their own lives and the value of the message presented.

Types of Intra-Program Interactivity

Audience participation during a broadcast is especially valuable for distance education and other technical knowledge programs, because it helps listeners learn and retain specific information. There are a variety of intra-program activities that the writer may consider.

1. **Parasocial interaction**. One of the real advantages of a well-written radio serial drama is its ability to stimulate listeners to think of the fictional characters as real people. Indeed, listeners often find themselves talking back to characters on the radio, offering them sympathy or advice out loud. Listeners sometimes also write letters addressed personally to one of the characters in the story. This type of interaction is enormously powerful in strengthening listeners' interest in the behavior change promoted by the drama. (See the section on "Social Learning Theory" in the Prologue for more on parasocial interaction.)

2. **Thoughtful interaction**. A radio program that stimulates responsive thought in the listeners is interactive. As listeners ponder the relevance of the program's message to their own lives, they are actively and meaningfully interacting with the program.

3. **Emotional interaction**. When listeners become emotionally involved with the lives of a drama's characters, they think about them, talk about them, and empathize with them even after the broadcast ends. There can be little doubt that listeners, at the same time, are learning from the characters' experiences.

4. **Physical activity**. Listeners can be invited to take part in physical activities related to the topic of the program. At the end of an episode featuring a child dangerously ill with diarrhea, for example, the host might ask listeners to collect—before the next program—the necessary ingredients for mixing an oral rehydration solution. At the opening of the next episode, the host reminds the listeners what is needed and gives them an extra minute (during which music is played) to assemble the ingredients. During one of the scenes, a character gives the recipe for the oral rehydration solution which, happily, saves the child's life. After the drama, the host invites listeners to make the solution for themselves following her clear, simple directions.

5. **Songs**. In many parts of the world, songs and music are an important part of the culture. If catchy songs related to the message are included by characters in the program and repeated regularly, listeners will soon learn to sing along even if they are not specifically invited to do so. As they sing and enjoy the song with the characters in the drama, the song's message will become embedded in their minds.

6. **Use of support materials**. Some social development projects produce special support materials to distribute to the audience of an Enter-Educate radio serial. These might consist of a booklet that repeats the information given by the drama or provides additional details. To ensure that listeners know how to use the support materials, the host can ask listeners to refer to them during the program or to look up something after the program.

   Support items for a distance education program might also include sample materials, such as a packet of oral contraceptive pills. During the radio program, the host can invite the listeners to practice holding and displaying the packet in the correct way, following her instructions.

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7. **Oral responses to a character**. In some dramas, one of the characters will put direct questions to the listeners and invite them to give immediate oral responses.

In the scene below, Tolto—a slightly foolish, but charming character who is always forgetful—is riding home alone on his mule. He is trying anxiously to recall the information he has just learned on his visit to the health worker and calls on listeners for help. The letters **PLR** in the script stand for **Pause For Listener Response**, and the figure 02 indicates that the pause lasts two seconds.

EXAMPLE

11.	TOLTO:	(CHATTING TO HIS MULE) I hope I can remember all that, Burro. I never can remember details...maybe I wasn't even listening properly. I think she said there were six temporary methods of contraception and two permanent ones.... Yes, I think I got that right. But what were the various methods called? (PAUSE) Stupid Burro, you don't know anything. (ANXIOUSLY PLEADING). Help me, listeners, help me. My wife won't give me dinner tonight if I don't remember the names. Oh somebody please tell me, what is the name of the permanent method for men?
12.	*PLR: 02*	
13.	TOLTO:	Vasectomy. Oh, that's right. Thank you...thank you...thank you. I'll remember that. Vasectomy...vasectomy. Great, but now, would somebody PLEASE tell me what was the name of the permanent method for women?
14.	*PLR: 02*	
15.	TOLTO:	Laparoscopy. That's it. I don't know how you people do it. Vasectomy...laparoscopy. I've got those two, but how will I ever recall the six temporary methods?

At this point, other characters arrive and the action changes. Later, however, Tolto pauses outside the door of his home, just before he sees his wife, and asks the listeners to help him recall the six temporary methods.

Calling for oral responses in this way can be highly effective as listeners quickly fall into the habit of trying to outsmart the character and recall everything he forgets. Only one character in a drama should speak directly to the audience in this way, however. Involving more than one character in interactive questioning tends to destroy the story's sense of reality. For the same reason, this character should address the audience only when there is no one else in the scene.

8. **Open-ended questions**. Posing an open-ended question at the end of a drama episode encourages audience members to think for themselves. Listeners might be asked to think about how they would resolve one of

the issues in the story, how they personally would behave in such a situation, or what they think of the action or scene just broadcast. Open-ended questions are a sign of respect for listeners, because they treat listeners as intelligent people who are capable of making rational decisions. Open-ended questions also avoid any suggestion that the program's creators have all the answers. Instead, these kinds of questions reflect one of the central realities of life: There is always more than one way to view a situation.

9. **Oral responses to a host**. As discussed in Chapter 5, distance education programs can employ a host to question listeners on a regular basis about the information presented in the drama. Listeners become accustomed to testing their understanding of the new information by answering the questions and listening for the correct answers. In programs of this nature, it is common for the host to act as something of an instructor.

The format might be:

- Standard opening
- Host's introduction (recap of last episode and introduction of today's topic)
- First scene of drama
- Interactive question segment
- Second scene of drama
- Interactive question segment
- Program summary
- Brief, final scene of drama ending with a "cliffhanger"
- Standard close

The Nepali distance education program, *Service Brings Reward*, uses this approach. In the excerpt below, three young schoolgirls are trying to decide whether to speak to Kamala, the village health worker, about a sensitive subject. The scene demonstrates the relevance of the information being taught. The rural health workers listening to the program easily can imagine themselves in the same situation as Kamala's, and they realize the importance of learning how to deal with adolescent concerns. The importance of knowing the answers to the interactive questions becomes apparent to them as they listen to the story.

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Services Brings Reward   Page 1 of 3
Episode #17   Draft: #3
Writer: Rameshwar Shrestha   Date: May 15, 1995

1. <u>FX. WATER FLOWING IN RIVER. UP :05 AND HOLD QUIETLY UNDER SCENE.</u>

2. <u>FX. GIGGLING AND WHISPERING OF GROUP OF YOUNG WOMEN.</u>

3. SARASWATI: Look there, Kamala sister is coming this way. I feel shy to ask this sort of thing. In fact, I don't even like to talk about it.

4. LAXMI: But, Saraswati, I want to know! We should know these sorts of things.

5. KALPANA: Look, Laxmi, she's coming this way. If you want to ask her, ask her now. Nobody is around. What can go wrong if you ask her?

6. KAMALA: (COMING IN TO MICROPHONE) What's up sisters? What are you giggling and laughing about?

7. SARASWATI: Nothing, sister Kamala. We are just talking and laughing among ourselves.

8. KAMALA: Let me sit with you. Let me hear what you are talking about. Or am I not allowed to listen?

9. LAXMI: No, no, Kamala, sister, nothing like that. Actually, we wanted to ask you something. But THEY are shy about the topic.

10. KAMALA: Oh...what is this thing that makes you so shy to talk with me, your village health worker? Being shy won't help you. Is it something to do with marriage?

11. LAXMI: No...it is not about marriage...but it's something like that.

12. KAMALA: It is just like asking for churned yogurt but not offering your cup. You want to know, but you don't want to ask. What is that?

13. LAXMI: That's not it, sister. But we feel hesitant to ask.

14. KAMALA: You silly girls. (LAUGHING) How can you go through life like this? I am not a stranger. If I know, I will tell you. If I don't, I will find out and tell you what I learn. Tell me, what's all this about?

15. LAXMI: I'm going to ask. Don't think that I am shameless.

16. KAMALA: No, no, no need to feel shy. You can ask me anything. Tell me, what is the matter?

17. LAXMI: We...we wanted to know about...about (HURRIEDLY) the changes in a woman's body as she grows up.

18. SARASWATI: (EMBARRASSED) No, no, sister. We were just talking foolishly.

19. KAMALA: Saraswati, sister, you must be eager to learn about this...but you feel shy. You should not feel shy about these things. Listen carefully, all of you, I will tell you.

Services Brings Reward   Page 2 of 3
Episode #17   Draft: #3
Writer: Rameshwar Shrestha   Date: May 15, 1995

20.	LAXMI:	(GIGGLING SLIGHTLY) Tell us quickly. Somebody might come along this way and we'll be in trouble.
21.	KAMALA:	What trouble? Everyone at your age needs to know these things. When a girl reaches this age, she experiences puberty. Do you know what "puberty" means?
22.	SARASWATI:	No...I don't.
23.	KAMALA:	Around the age of 13 or 14 years, a girl reaches what we call puberty. At this time she is neither a child nor an adult. Isn't it so?
24.	LAXMI:	It is not good to call her a child. We wouldn't like that.
25.	KAMALA:	And at this time some changes occur in her body.
26.	LAXMI:	Do changes occur for boys at this age, too?
27.	KAMALA:	Yes, boys undergo changes too. We'll talk about that later. Right now, let's talk about the changes for girls.
28.	LAXMI:	Then, sister, what are these changes that occur in the girl's body?
29.	KAMALA:	Changes at this stage include the development of breasts.
30.	KALPANA:	Chaa...sister...what are you saying?
31.	KAMALA:	This is not a matter of chaa...you need to know these things.
32.	SARASWATI:	What other changes happen, sister?
33.	LAXMI:	Now Saraswati wants to listen and learn like the rest of us.
34.	KAMALA:	Hair begins to grow under the arms and between the legs.
35.	KALPANA:	Chhi...what kind of sister is this?
36.	KAMALA:	I told you, these are things that you need to know. This is not a matter for chaa...chiii (EXPRESSIONS OF DISGUST). These are good things to know about. Also, the voice becomes somewhat richer and deeper, and... menstruation will start. Do you know what we mean by this menstruation?
37.	LAXMI:	I can't describe it, but I know what it means.
38.	KAMALA:	What happens, do you know?
39.	LAXMI:	Blood comes out.
40.	KAMALA:	Yes, Laxmi is right. Every month the female body prepares a place inside...the uterus...where a baby could grow. If pregnancy does not occur, this prepared place is shed from the body two weeks later. We explain this with the analogy, "as we prepare food for a guest, so the uterus prepares a thick bed for the baby to grow." Do you understand that?
41.	LAXMI:	Hmm...to some extent I understand.

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Services Brings Reward		Page 3 of 3
Episode #17		Draft: #3
Writer: Rameshwar Shrestha		Date: May 15, 1995

42. KAMALA: Right now I am supposed to be on my way to see someone in the next village. Let's talk again another day, sitting here together. But now I must go. (MOVING OFF MICROPHONE) Good-bye.

43. FX. WATER FLOWING IN RIVER. UPAND OUT.

44. BINOD (HOST):

Respected health worker friends, we have just heard a discussion between Kamala and three village school girls. In her usual, gentle way, Kamala was helping them understand their growing bodies. Health worker friends, we can be very helpful to young people in OUR villages by encouraging them to understand their growing bodies. Let's see if we can recall some of the important information that Kamala gave the girls. Tell me, health worker friends, what did she tell them is the age at which puberty begins?

45. *PLR 02*

46. BINOD: Thirteen or fourteen. That's right. Now tell me, what are four changes in the girl's body that we should tell them about?

47. *PLR 05*

48. BINOD: Breast development; hair growth under the arms and between the legs; a deepening of the voice; the onset of menstruation. Yes. Perhaps you gave them in a different order, but that is not important. Just so long as we remember to mention all these changes. Kamala gave a very clear explanation of menstruation, too. She said that every month the female body prepares a place in the uterus where a baby could grow. So tell me, what did she say happens if pregnancy does not occur?

49. *PLR: 02*

50. BINOD: The prepared place is shed. That's right. The prepared place is shed from the body in about two weeks. I liked the analogy she used, too. Tell me "if you recall it" what was that analogy?

51. *PLR: 05*

52. BINOD: "As we prepare food for a guest, so the uterus prepares a thick bed where a baby could grow." Perhaps we can all remember that analogy and use it ourselves when we are discussing puberty with our clients. "As we prepare food for a guest, so the uterus prepares a thick bed where a baby could grow."

53. Oh, but look, Kamala is returning to the health post. I wonder if she met the person she was going to visit.

At this point, the program crosses back to the drama, and to a scene in the village.

Guidelines for Interactive Questions

When interactive questions are posed regularly in a serial, they become an anticipated part of the learning process. Because listeners are aware that each drama scene will be followed by an interactive session, they soon learn to listen with a purpose: to find and absorb the information about which they are likely to be questioned. This type of interactivity also allows learning to be incremental. Listeners are encouraged, through the interactive questions, to make sure that they have understood and learned one aspect of the topic before moving to the next.

Note that, in the example above, the interactive segment blends comfortably with the story. The health worker, Kamala, ends her session with the girls and moves out of the scene. The river sound, which opened the scene, also marks its end and makes a comfortable transition between the drama and the interactive segment.

The script above also demonstrates the basic guidelines a writer should follow when adding interactive questions to a radio program.

1. **A cue (or prompt) is used** to alert listeners that an interactive question is coming. In this case, the cue words, "Tell me," signal the listeners that they are expected to respond. These same words are used by Binod every time he asks a question that requires an oral response. Listeners quickly become accustomed to the cue and what it means.

2. **Base questions on information that has been taught**. The interactive question session follows immediately after the drama scene in which the information has been presented. This increases the likelihood that listeners will answer correctly, and it lets the interactive session reinforce the learning.

3. **Leave a brief pause for listeners' response (PLR)** immediately after the question. The script writer must time these pauses carefully, so that they are long enough for the listener to respond, but not so long that there is "dead air" (silence) before the host speaks again. A two-second pause generally is sufficient for a one- or two-word answer. An answer requiring a longer response may need five seconds. In the script above, for example, line 45 calls for a two-second pause, because the answer is brief. Some of the other pauses last five seconds, because the answers are somewhat longer.

4. **Expect short answers**. Interactive questions should elicit clear, short answers from listeners. The aim of these interactive sessions is for listeners to check quickly and simply that they have heard and absorbed the important pieces of information. In lines 44-46 of the script above, for example, Binod asks, "Tell me, friends, what did she tell them is the age at which puberty begins?" The listeners are expected to respond with no more than three words: "Thirteen or fourteen."

Guidelines for Interactive Questions

1. Use the same cue before each question.

2. Ask questions only about information that has been taught already.

3. Allow a pause for listener response.

4. Ask questions that require short answers.

5. Give answers in the manner the audience is likely to give them.

6. Give words of praise after the answers have been given.

7. Avoid questions that require only "yes" or "no" for an answer.

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5. **Give answers in the same words the listeners are likely to use.** Generally, listeners will answer with a few brief words, not with complete, correctly structured sentences. The host, therefore, should give similarly brief answers. When Binod answered the question about the age of puberty, he said, "thirteen or fourteen," using exactly the same words that listeners would be likely to use. He did not use a formal answer, such as, "The age at which puberty begins for a girl is usually thirteen or fourteen."

6. **Give the correct answer immediately after the pause.** Listeners want to and need to hear the correct answer as soon as possible, so the answer must be given immediately following the pause. Words of encouragement, like "that's right"or "yes," can be added after the answer. Avoid using the words, "Yes, you are right," because this inadvertently might reinforce a listener's wrong answer. It is safer to say, "Yes, that's right," immediately after giving the correct answer.

7. **Avoid "yes" or "no" questions.** Listeners have a fifty percent chance of being correct, no matter what they reply, when the question requires only a simple "yes" or "no" answer. Moreover, the point of interactive questioning is to have listeners repeat the important pieces of information which they should be learning. In line 50 of the script above, for example, it might seem more natural for Binod to ask, "Tell me, can you recall the analogy she used?" That question, however, could invite a simple response of "yes" or "no" from the listener. The question is framed, therefore, in a different way: "Tell me—if you recall it—what was that analogy?"

Types of Post-Program Interactivity

There also are a variety of ways to invite listeners to respond or react to a drama after the conclusion of the day's broadcast.

1. **Letters.** Listeners can be invited to write to the organizers of a radio program, either submitting questions, telling their own experiences, or sharing their ideas on the topic under discussion (e.g., family planning). Some radio dramas allow a few minutes at the end of each broadcast for a "Listeners' Forum," during which letters from listeners are read and their questions answered by an expert. Alternatively, every tenth program in a series might be devoted entirely to a Listeners' Forum. Early programs should air a few specially constructed prototype letters to give listeners an idea of the kinds of questions and suggestions that would be welcome. The address to which listeners should send their letters should be announced at the end of each program.

   Some radio projects even prepare special post cards or aerograms bearing the project logo to mail as a "thank you" to each listener who sends in a letter or question. This lets listeners know that their contributions are important, even if not all letters can be read on the air.

2. **Telephone calls**. In places where telephones are available, listeners can be invited to call in their questions and comments. These can be recorded and replayed during the Listener Forum section of a future program. To encourage listeners to call in and to guide them on how to present their ideas on the phone, some prototype calls should be aired following each of the early episodes of the serial.

3. **Quizzes**. Most people enjoy testing their knowledge in a quiz, especially when they are fairly sure that they will get all the answers right. Occasionally providing a short quiz at the end of an episode will motivate audience members to keep listening carefully so that they can test their knowledge in future quizzes. Offering prizes is not necessary; the satisfaction of getting the answers right is incentive enough for most listeners. Quiz questions always should be phrased in the same language that the program used. If a character in the drama, for example, speaks of certain "bodily changes" experienced by a woman on the pill, then the quiz question should ask about "bodily changes," not "side effects."

4. **Contests**. While it is unnecessary to offer prizes for every quiz, it is sometimes beneficial to hold some other type of contest for which small prizes are offered. These contests can range all the way from asking some fairly technical questions that have been discussed in the various episodes of the serial, to having listeners guess what a certain character in the drama will do to solve some problem in her life. One way to get people to listen to the program and take part in the contest is to announce that, as well as receiving a small prize, audience members who mail in the right answer will have their names entered in a lottery with the chance of winning a grand prize at the end of the serial.

5. **Group listening and discussion**. The audience can be encouraged to listen to the serial in groups and to discuss a question together. Some likely answers to the question can be presented during the next episode. Possible questions are:

   - What would you do if you were [name of character] in that situation?
   - What advice would you give [name of character] to help her overcome her problem?
   - Do you think [name of character] has made the right decision?
   - What are the advantages and disadvantages of what she plans to do?

   Group discussions also can focus on listener knowledge. The host might instruct listeners, for example, to discuss what they know about the three-month injectable, what other information they need, and where they can go to obtain that information.

   If the radio drama is part of a pilot project in a particular region, a local coordinator may be able to visit listening groups during the broadcast in order to monitor the program and collect immediate audience feedback. This also makes possible face-to-face, interactive discussion of the program and its message.

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6. **Informal discussion**. Audience members who listen individually still can be encouraged to discuss the episode with their family and friends. They might be invited, for example, to talk with family members about where they would go in their community to obtain the health, agricultural, or financial services described in the drama. A more ambitious suggestion might be to discuss establishing a men's group in their community to encourage a new behavior, such as family planning. These kinds of discussions can be modeled in the drama, so that listeners feel confident about initiating such a discussion themselves.

7. **Role-playing**. When listeners gather in a group to hear the serial, the host may suggest that after the broadcast they role-play a situation that just occurred during the drama. In some cultures, for example, it is difficult for husbands and wives to speak freely to one another about subjects like family planning. Surprising as it may seem some of the shyest people open up remarkably when they are acting the part of someone else. Group role-play of this kind often can help people discover ways of doing things that they would not think of on their own.

Although radio seems like a one-way medium, creative writers will find ways in which to encourage listeners to interact with the programs. Once listeners become personally involved in the learning, it is more likely to become a permanent part of their lives.

Chapter Summary

■ Interactivity refers to any interaction between the characters or non-characters of the radio program and the listeners.

■ Interactive involvement greatly enhances listeners' ability to learn, retain and use information. Listener interaction can occur during the broadcast (intra-program interactivity) or after the broadcast (post-program interactivity).

■ Intra-program interactivity includes parasocial, thoughtful, emotional, physical, and oral interaction.

■ Questions requiring an immediate oral response from listeners can help them determine whether or not they have understood and can recall information.

■ Guidelines for the use of interactive questions include:

- The use of a cue prior to a question;
- Basing questions on information already given;
- Providing a pause for listeners' response (PLR);
- Keeping expected answers short;
- Giving answers in the same words that listeners would use;
- Giving the answer immediately after the pause;
- Avoiding "yes" or "no" questions;
- Blending interactive questions with the story; and
- Providing open-ended questions to encourage thinking.

■ Post-program interactivity may include letters, telephone calls, quizzes, contests, group discussions, and role-playing.

9

Chapter Ten

Testing the Pilot Programs

The writer and evaluator pilot test the program and learn from the audience
how it may be improved.

Learning Objectives

■ To understand the importance of pilot programs.

■ To appreciate the importance of the writer being present at the pilot
program tests.

■ To know the five main areas of pilot testing that are significant for the
writer.

■ To know how to use the "Nine Ps" of Effective Enter-Educate
programming to check program revisions following pilot testing.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, assemble a pilot program test questionnaire for
your audience, based on the questions suggested in this chapter and
covering the five areas of importance to the writer.

Use the questionnaire to test one or two of your completed episodes on
a sample audience.

Compile the results of the tests and determine what revisions are
needed to improve the scripts.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The importance of pilot programs**

❖ **The purpose of pilot scripts**

❖ **Five areas to be tested**

❖ **The Nine Ps of effective Enter-Educate programs**

The Importance of Pilot Programs

Pilot programs guide the construction of future programs in the same way that a coastal pilot guides a ship in and out of port. Their purpose is to ensure that the story ideas and message presentation prepared by the design team and incorporated into the script are appropriate and likely to be successful. During pilot tests—which take place before full-time script writing and production begins—a sample audience listens to pilot programs created especially for the testing process and then responds to written questionnaires or participates in focus-group discussions.

Even before formal pilot testing is done, some writers like to try out ideas on representative members of the audience. This type of testing does not require the scripts to be recorded on tape. Instead, the trial scripts can be read aloud to the audience, either by the writers themselves—if they are good readers—or by actors.

The program manager and the evaluation team decide when, where, and how to test the pilot programs on a formal basis. While the writers of pro-social drama are not expected to be experts in evaluation, they should be present during the tests and should join the evaluation team in interpreting the results. This lets them see firsthand how well their scripts meet the needs of the audience and of the project designers.

It is usually necessary to test only three or four programs if the writer fulfills these three important obligations while writing:

- Becoming well acquainted with the audience;
- Consistently using the Writer's Brief as the foundation for plot and message development; and
- Structuring the plots, characters, and settings of the serial correctly.

The pilot scripts, however, should not be limited to the first few episodes in the serial, because the story in these early episodes has not advanced very far and the message has only just been introduced. Instead, pilot scripts should be drawn from different parts of the scope and sequence list, for example, episodes 1, 20, and 35 of a 52-episode serial. Pilot tests also can be

used to try out two or three different interpretations of the story or message presentations to determine which approach is most attractive and appropriate to the audience.

If a serial has been well designed and well written, the pilot tests never should result in the need for major rethinking or rewriting. Rather, the episodes tested will detect the need for minor changes, that will enhance the ability of the serial to promote social development.

The Purpose of Pilot Scripts

Pilot scripts are written especially to:

- Introduce the major characters and the central uniting character, to be sure that they are acceptable to the audience and that the audience is likely to trust and believe in them—especially the central uniting character;

- Convey some particular aspect of the message in two or three different ways to be sure that the audience can understand and appreciate the message; and

- Demonstrate the type of emotional involvement and dramatic suspense that listeners can expect in forthcoming episodes.

Five Areas To Be Tested

The evaluation team probably will prepare the final questionnaire or discussion guide for the pilot test. Understandably, the evaluators' focus is on whether or not the audience has understood and absorbed the program's message. The writer, however, should ensure that these five other areas are covered:

1. **Do the listeners accept the program**? Do they believe that the program was designed and is appropriate for people just like themselves?

2. **Do the listeners understand the program**, including the progress of the story, the meaning and importance of the message, and the language used?

3. **Do the listeners trust the program**? Do they feel that the characters in the drama can be accepted as reliable authorities on the subject being discussed?

4. **Are the listeners attracted to the story**? Do they genuinely want to hear more of it?

5. **Do the listeners appreciate the program**, both the story and the message?

To gather detailed information on these five vital points, pilot tests—whether they take the form of focus-group discussions or written questionnaires—can include some or all of the following questions:

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1. **Does the audience accept the program**?
   - Do you think this program is about people who live in a community like yours, or is it about total strangers?
   - Do you think it is more suitable for men or for women?
   - What age people do you think would enjoy this serial? People of your age or people of a different age?
   - Do any of the characters in the story remind you of anyone you know? Who?
   - Did any of the characters in the story say or do anything that you think would offend or upset any of your friends and relatives? What was it?

2. **Does the audience understand the story and the message**?
   - What are the names of some of the characters and what are they like?
   - What is happening in the story so far?
   - What do you think is likely to happen next in the story?
   - What do you think might happen eventually?
   - Talk about any part of the story that seemed foolish or unbelievable to you or anything that you did not understand?
   - In one episode of this story, the people of the community will be faced with a friend who develops AIDS. How do you think these characters [name two characters] will react to that news? (Name two characters)
   - What words or phrases used by any of the characters did you not understand?
   - Did you feel uncomfortable with the language used by any of the characters? If so, what?
   - Was there any information in the drama that might be useful for you or your friends? What was it?
   - What main points of the information do you recall? (This question will help the writer determine if the pacing of the teaching is correct.)
   - Was the amount information given too little, too much, or just right?

3. **Does the audience trust the program**?
   - Who were the people in the story that you felt you could trust if you knew them personally?
   - Who were the people you would not trust?
   - Was there anything discussed in the story that you do not believe? If so, what was it?
   - Do you think that characters in a story can be relied upon to give good advice? Why or why not?
   - Do you trust the source of information in the story?
   - Is there someone else you would rather turn to for advice? Who?

4. **Is the audience attracted to the story**?

   - Which of the following words would you use to describe this story?
     - boring
     - exciting
     - funny
     - ordinary
     - realistic
     - emotional
     - interesting
     - suspenseful
     - embarrassing
     - offensive

   - Tell me about any of the characters that particularly attracted your attention? Tell me why this person attracted your attention?

   - If you had the choice of listening once a week at the same time to this program, a music program, or a magazine program, which would you choose? Why?

   - Do you believe that this story could happen in real life? Why or why not?

5. **Does the audience appreciate the programs**?

   - Do you think people would be likely to listen to this program on a regular basis? Why or why not?

   - Tell me why you thing this drama is or is not an interesting way to learn some valuable lessons in life?

   - Do you prefer to learn important matters through a drama like this or by listening to an expert give a talk?

   - Why would you recommend or not recommend the drama to your friends and family?

The results of the pilot tests are tabulated and interpreted by the evaluators, who should share them with the writer and the other members of the review team. The program manager, review team, and writer then use the findings to decide how to improve the scripts, where necessary. Most often pilot scripts are written especially for testing purposes and are not part of the finished serial. It is not necessary, therefore, to rewrite and retest them unless they reveal serious problems. The changes and recommendations that arise during the pilot tests should be used as guidelines for future scripting.

Once full-scale writing and production is under way, it is a good idea for the writer occasionally to observe the broadcasts and the listeners' reactions, just to be sure everything stays on track.

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The Nine P's of Effective Enter-Educate Programs

1. **P**ervasive
2. **P**opular
3. **P**ersonal
4. **P**articipatory
5. **P**assionate
6. **P**ersuasive
7. **P**ractical
8. **P**rofitable
9. **P**roven effective

</div>

The Nine Ps of Effective Enter-Educate Programs

As a final test of the potential success of a serial, the writer may want to check each script against the **Nine Ps of Effective Enter-Educate Programs**. These recommend that, to be effective, a drama should be:

1. **Pervasive**—appealing to and influencing a wide spectrum of the community.
2. **Popular**—attracting and holding listeners' attention so that they not only enjoy listening and want to tune in regularly themselves, but also encourage others to listen and to consider adopting the new behaviors.
3. **Personal**—appealing to individual listeners who can identify with one of the varied characters who represent many different aspects of the listening audience.
4. **Participatory**—showing the audience members how they can get involved personally in advocating and bringing about a positive social change.
5. **Passionate**—displaying a wide range of human emotions or passions that attract and involve the listening audience through the various plots and characters.
6. **Persuasive**—presenting believable role-model characters who can demonstrate how listeners can move towards the new behavior comfortably, naturally, and gradually.
7. **Practical**—Entertainment infrastructures and performers already exist. They always need new themes to keep audiences interested, and the themes of health, sickness, love, sex, and reproduction are compelling and dramatic. Effective Enter-Educate approaches are using believable characters to present actions that audience members can understand and adopt comfortably themselves.
8. **Profitable**—Entertainment, unlike much health education, can pay its own way. It can generate sponsorship, attract support for collateral materials, and bring financial returns to producers and performers.
9. **Proven effective**—People respond to entertainment. They acquire new knowledge, change their attitudes, and act differently as a result of messages conveyed in entertainment, as Johns Hopkins has documented in more than a dozen Enter-Educate projects.

Chapter Summary

■ A pilot program guides and directs the construction of other programs. Pilot programs are written and tested before full-scale script writing begins.

■ Even though trained researchers conduct the pilot program tests, writers should be involved in them so that they can see firsthand the strengths and weaknesses of the programs they are creating.

■ Pilot scripts introduce main characters, include part of the message, and demonstrate the type of emotional involvement the drama will offer the audience.

■ The writer needs to know whether the audience accepts, understands, trusts, is attracted to, and appreciates the programs.

10

Chapter Eleven

Script Presentation

Writers preparing their scripts

Learning Objectives

- To understand and appreciate the importance of uniform script presentation.

- To know the standard conventions for setting out each page of the script.

- To know how to write directions to the technician correctly.

- To know how to write directions to actors about the interpretation of the lines.

Exercise

Use the recommendations in this chapter as script presentation guidelines for every script you prepare.

> ## Topics in This Chapter
>
> ❖ **The importance of uniform script presentation**
>
> ❖ **The cover sheet**
>
> ❖ **Setting out each script page**
>
> ❖ **Noting technical information on the script**

The Importance of Uniform Script Presentation

Most writers have their own methods for putting the first draft of a script on paper. For the finished script, however, all writers on a project must adopt a standard presentation that makes reading and handling the script as practical as possible for everyone using it. This includes the reviewers, the director, the actors, the audio technician, and the people writing support materials. The following pages describe a standard layout for radio scripts which is simple, practical, and economical.

The Cover Sheet

The next page shows the components that should be included on the **cover sheet** or front page of every Enter-Educate radio script. The following list describes each component and the reasons for its inclusion.

❶ The **series title** immediately informs anyone picking up the script to which series it belongs.

❷ **Program number and topic**. This is vital information for anyone using the script.

- The director needs to be sure that the recording tape is "slated" (identified) with the program number so that the radio station will play the correct tape on the given day.
- The actors need to know that they have the script that matches their recording timetable.
- The reviewers need to be sure that the script number and topic match what is in the Writer's Brief.
- People maintaining the project records or consulting its archives need to be able to identify each program's number and topic at a glance.

(The number of programs in the series will have been determined during the Design Workshop prior to the commencement of script writing.)

❸ **Date**. This is the date on which that particular version of the script was written.

❹ **The draft** or **final** identifier is of paramount importance to the director, who must be sure that the script that comes to the studio for production is the final, approved version and not an earlier draft.

❺ **Duration**. If every episode in a series is the same length, noting the program's duration on every script may seem unnecessary. Once the script is placed in the archives, however, it will let people consulting the script know immediately the intended length of the program.

❻ **Writer's name**. This is an acknowledgment of the writer's creativity. In addition, it lets project staff know at a glance to whom to return the script for alteration or revisions.

❼ **Program objectives and purposes**. This is important to:
   • The director and actors, who can better interpret the script if they understand what it is trying to achieve; and
   • The reviewers, who can better evaluate the script if they know its aims. Reviewers should have a copy of the Writer's Brief against which to check the content and expression of the message of each program.

❽ **Cast of characters**. This saves the director from going through the whole script to find out which actors need copies of the script and who should be called for rehearsal. It also eliminates the risk of overlooking a needed actor.

❾ **Music and FX (sound effects)**. These are listed in the order in which they occur in the script. Some directors like writers to include the page and line number of each FX or music cue so that they can be checked quickly prior to production. This information helps the audio director and the studio technician who must prepare the sound effects and musical interludes. It is especially valuable when the director is using "edit-free"production (more information on edit-free production is included in the companion volume to this book, *Radio Serial Drama for Social Development: A Program Manager's Guide*, which mandates that all music and FX be prepared in advance and inserted as the program is recorded.

All this information should be supplied on the cover sheet by the writer, who must ensure that the information is accurate. Some writers like to save time by preparing cover sheets for all of a serial's episodes at the outset of the project. This can be done easily if the writer is working from a detailed Writer's Brief. These prepared cover sheets include everything except the cast list and the MUSIC/FX list. These the writer adds as each script is completed.

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EXAMPLE

Cover Sheet

❶   **CUT YOUR COAT ACCORDING TO YOUR CLOTH**

❷ Program #20: Contraceptive Pill   ❸   Date: October 27, 1996

❹ Draft #-2----Final----   ❺ Program Duration: 15 minutes

❻ Writer: Kuber Gartaula

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❼ OBJECTIVES At the end of this program, listeners will:

KNOW: • That pills must be taken in a prescribed way and that instructions must be followed precisely if the pills are to be effective;
- That the health worker can advise on how to use the pills and can demonstrate their use; and
- Where contraceptive pills can be obtained.

DO: • Consider using pills if they seem appropriate to their circumstances;
- Seek advice on use of the pills from the health worker; and
- Encourage others to recognize that the pill is a safe, reliable, modern contraceptive method.

FEEL: • Confident in considering the pill as a contraceptive method, and in discussing it with the health worker.

PURPOSES: The purposes of this program are to:
- Explain where pills can be obtained,
- Explain how pills are taken to prevent pregnancy.

---

❽ CAST: ❾MUSIC/FX

	Pg.	Line	
1. Announcer	1	1	Music. Sig Tune - fade on; hold under
2. Narrator	1	3	Music. Sig Tune - fade on and out
3. Kainla	1	5	FX. Bells ringing in temple.
4. Bam Bahadur	2	2	Tape Cut from Pr. 19. Pg. 8. L 6-9
5. Gauri			"Oh, I see you are the lady...you
6. Bhunti			create confusion."
7. Bhanumaya	3	1	FX. Noise of 1 or 2 birds.
8. Beli	6	1	Music. Short scene change music
9. Kagkhuti	7	10	Music. Short scene change music
	9	5	Music. Short scene change music
	10	5	Music. Sig Tune; fade on; hold under
	10	7	Music. Sig Tune; fade on and out

Setting Out Each Script Page

Each page in the script should be set out as demonstrated on the sample script of *Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth.*

❶ **Page header**. Each page of every script must have a page header giving the series' title, program number, writer's name, date, and page number. The number of the last page of the script always is given along with the current page number—for example, "Page 1 of 10"—so that the actors, reviewers, director, and anyone else using the script can be sure that they have all the pages. If a word processor or computer is used for script writing, this header can be entered for regular use. Where a word processor or computer is not available, the writer can copy a quantity of script paper with the heading blocks already in place.

❷ **Speech numbering**. Every new direction or speech on the page is numbered, so that the director can quickly cue an actor or technician to a particular line in the script. Perhaps the director wants to stop the tape, rewind, and then re-record from a particular spot. He can direct the technician to "rewind to the end of line 5" and advise the actor to "pick up from the beginning of line 6."

When an actor has a long speech that is divided into several paragraphs, each paragraph should be given a separate number so that it can be identified and referred to easily.

Most writers restart numbering on each page with the number 1. Some writers prefer to continue the numbers sequentially throughout the entire script. The disadvantage of the second method is that if—during editing or rewriting—a line is added or omitted early in the script, every line from there to the end of the script must be renumbered.

Writers using word processors or computers might find it easier to use the automatic line numbering command, in which case every line of every page will be numbered.

❸ **Names**. The name of the character who is speaking is given in UPPER CASE letters followed by a colon (:), and a reasonable space is left on the same line before the speech begins. A double space is left between the end of one speech and the beginning of the next to make it perfectly clear where one actor's lines end and another's begin.

❹ **Instructions to the actor** about how to deliver the line or directions to move towards or away from the microphone are given in upper case letters, in parentheses, at the beginning of the actor's line. This lets actors recognize them immediately as instructions, so they do not read them inadvertently.

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EXAMPLE

7. BIRE: (WHISPERING). It is time to go to bed now.

8. BELI: (COMING IN TO MICROPHONE) Yes, my husband. The children are already asleep.

When the actor must change tone or move in the middle of a speech, the instructions are included at the appropriate place.

EXAMPLE

BIRE: Where are the children, Beli? (PAUSE) (CALLING OFF,
               WORRIED) Beli...Beli, where are you?

---

❺ **Speech pause or break**. An ellipsis (a series of full stops) is used to indicate a pause or a natural break in a character's speech.

EXAMPLE

NARRATOR: And once again it is time for us to visit Geraldton....I'm sure
               you remember Geraldton....Well, it is time for us to go there
               once more.

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❻ **Technician's directions**. All directions for the technician (that is, directions regarding music and sound effects) are given in upper case letters and underlined, so that the technician can identify quickly those areas of the script which are his or her responsibility. The first word in a musical direction is "<u>MUSIC</u>," and the first word in a sound effect direction is "<u>FX</u>." This lets the technician know immediately whether to ready the music tape or the sound effects tape.

EXAMPLE

1. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP :05. CROSS FADE TO</u>

2. JOSEPH: Oh well, back to work. Every day it's the same old thing...
                chop the wood; milk the cows.

3. <u>FX. SOUND OF WOOD BEING CHOPPED. MIXED WITH FX.
    CATTLE MOOING IN DISTANCE</u>

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❼ **End of page.** A speech is never broken at the end of the page. If the whole speech will not fit on the page, then it should be transferred to the top of the next page. This is for the actors' sake: Actors must turn their

heads briefly away from the microphone when they move from one page to the next, making it difficult to read lines. In the sample script on the next page, line 14, which is an incomplete speech, should have been moved to the next page.

❽ **Remarks column**. This is described following the sample script page.

---

❶ **Series Title:** *Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth*   Page 1 of 2
Episode #3   Draft: #2
Writer: Caber Gartaula   Date: October 31

❷	1. BIR BAHADUR:	(SLIGHTLY NERVOUS) What happened, did you not ask the health worker?	❽
❸	2. BELI:	I should not ask the Health Worker such things...rather I should do what the younger father-in-law told us to do. Do you know why your older sister-in-law had miscarriages?	
	3. BIR BA:	Why?	
	4. BELI:	He said that after conception Laxmi did not take enough nutritious food and enough rest.	
	5. BIR BA:	Forget the past. Since you are at home, why don't you take care of her?	
❹	6. BELI:	No, no, something has happened to me like what has happened to older sister-in-law. (VERY SHY) It is two months....	
	7. BIR BA:	VERY HAPPY) Is it so? It is two months already.Have you told anybody else?	
	8. BELI:	Yes, other women know women's business...only you...	
❺	9. BIR BA:	And now I know too.... I am very happy.	
❻	10. MUSIC. SCENE CHANGE MUSIC. BRIEF :05		
	11. FX. NOISE OF FRYING AND STIRRING VEGETABLE CURRY.		
	12. BELI:	Why are you in the kitchen so early, older sister-in-law?	
	13. LAXMI:	Today I am preparing food early for the father-in-law only.	
❼	14. MAYADEVI:	Your father-in-law has to go to the fields early, so	

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❽ **Remarks Column**. An option rather than a requirement, the remarks column provides the writer with a place to make comments or suggestions directed to the support materials writer, monitors, or evaluators. The writer might, for instance, want to ask monitors to observe whether the audience understands a new analogy used in the script.

In the following script, the writer uses the remarks column to remind the support writer what to include in Health Worker's Handbook, which is the support material being prepared for this series of programs. The writer wants to ensure that the handbook and the script use the same Health Worker Contraceptive Checklist.

EXAMPLE

5.	HW:	I am glad you have come to ask my advice about the contraceptive pill. It may very well be an appropriate for you. First, however, we must be sure that you do not have any of the conditions that make it unwise for a woman to use the pill. May I ask you some questions?	*Support Writer: Be sure to put the list of conditions in the Health Worker's Handbook*
6.	SHANA:	Yes, of course.	
7.	HW:	Are you taking any medication for TB or for epilepsy?	
8.	SHANA:	Goodness, no. I am perfectly healthy.	
9.	HW:	Good. Then tell me, have you ever had any blood clots in your legs, your eyes, or your lungs?	
10.	SHANA:	No.	
11.	HW:	What about bleeding? Have you had any vaginal bleeding lately?	
12.	SHANA:	No, again.	
13.	HW:	I have already checked your blood pressure, so I know you are not in the danger zone which is anything higher than 180 over 105. So far things are looking good. And I have also checked your breasts and found nothing to suggest you might have breast cancer.	
14.	SHANA:	Does that mean then that I can take the pill?	
15.	HW:	I think so. There is one more category of women who shouldn't take the pill, but you don't fit it.	
16.	SHANA:	What is it?	
17.	HW:	Women who are over 40 years of age and smoke more than 15 cigarettes a day.	

Noting Technical Information in the Script

There are no hard and fast rules about how to word technical instructions about sound effects, music, and the like. Many radio directors have their own preferences for how these details should be indicated, so the writer might want to consult the director on this question. Perhaps the best rule is to keep the instructions simple and clear. The following directions are generally acceptable to most directors in most cultures.

Direction	Meaning
1. MUSIC. FADE UP	Start with the music very soft and gradually raise the volume.
2. MUSIC UP :10. CUT	Start with the music at full volume. Let it run for ten seconds. Then cut (stop) it.
3. MUSIC UP :05. FADE UNDER AND HOLD	Start with the music at full volume. Let it run for five seconds, then fade it down to a low level and keep it playing under the dialogue that follows.
4. MUSIC :05. FADE UNDER AND OUT	Let the music play for five seconds. Then fade the volume down for a few seconds, and then cut (stop) it altogether.
5. MUSIC UP :05. CROSS FADE TO 6. FX. CHICKENS CLUCKING	Play the music alone for five seconds. Then gradually lower the volume of the music and, at the same time, begin the sound effect of the chickens softly and increase its volume. Once the chicken sound effect is established, the music should be cut completely.
7. FX. TRUMPETS AT DISTANCE :03 BRING IN RAPIDLY. HOLD UP :03. CUT	The trumpet sound should be heard quietly (as if in the distance) for three seconds. Then the volume should be raised rapidly and held at top volume for three seconds, and abruptly cut (stopped).
8. CUT IN TAPE EP#23. PAGE 5. LINES 4 - 12, JOHN: "Today is my birthday"...to...MAVIS: "You'd better come home early."	Include a segment of the previously recorded episode number 23, as indicated by the page and line numbers and the speech cues.
9. FX. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND SOUND BED THROUGH SCENE.	The sounds of a school playground should be played softly in the background through out the scene. The dialogue is heard over it.
10. FX. COWS MOOING. OCCASIONAL. THROUGHOUT SCENE.	The sound of cows mooing should be played softly several times throughout the scene.
11. MUSIC. FADE UP THEME MUSIC THROUGH FINAL SPEECH. THEN UP TO END.	Bring the closing music in quietly under the announcer's voice during the closing remarks of the program. When the announcer finishes, bring the music up loudly to end the program.

11

Whatever directions are used, the most important point for writers to remember is that, if they want a particular sound effect or music at a certain place in the script, they must indicate it clearly and accurately so that the director and the audio technician know exactly what is required.

Instructions to Actors

Instructions for the actors should be kept brief—one word wherever possible—and should be typed in the line at the exact place they are needed. Instructions about moving toward or away from the microphone might be given as:

- (MOVING IN TO THE MICROPHONE) and (MOVING AWAY FROM THE MICROPHONE);

- (COMING IN) and (GOING OUT); or

- (FADING IN) and (FADING OUT).

Chapter Summary

■ The script must be presented on the page in a logical and consistent manner, so that all those using it can refer to lines and instructions quickly and accurately.

■ The cover sheet of the script should contain this essential information:

- Program number, title, topic, date of writing, duration, writer's name;
- Program objectives and purposes;
- Character list; and
- Sequential list of required sound effects and music.

■ Every page of the script should have a header showing the program title, writer's name, writing date, and page number.

■ Every line of the script is numbered for ease of reference.

■ Names are given in upper case letters, followed by a colon. A reasonable space is left between the name and the speech.

■ All instructions for technicians are presented in upper case letters and underlined.

■ All instructions for actors are given in upper case letters in parentheses at the appropriate place in the speech.

■ A remarks column can be placed on the right-hand side of the page where the writer can make notes for the support materials writer, director, monitors, and others using the script.

11

Chapter Twelve

The Finished Script and Writer's Check List
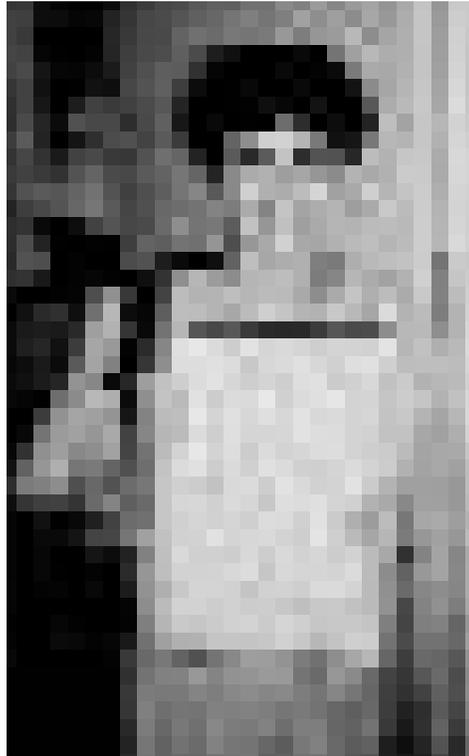
A finished script!

Learning Objective

■ To appreciate how the various components of a radio serial for social development fit together to create a potentially successful script.

■ To learn how to check your own scripts against a Script Check list.

Exercise

Study this script carefully and evaluate your own script against the way the various components of an Enter-Educate serial have been blended successfully in it. Use the list of script characteristics at the beginning of this chapter as a Script Check List to ensure that your script is constructed as well as it can be.

> ## Topics in This Chapter
>
> ❖ **Putting a serial episode together**
>
> ❖ **Writer's Check List of essential features in a well-constructed episode**
>
> ❖ *Life in Hopeful Village* **episode**
>
> ❖ **Original version of** *Life in Hopeful Village* **episode**

Putting a Serial Episode Together

This chapter presents an episode from the Jamaican radio serial, *Life in Hopeful Village*, to demonstrate how all the elements of good script writing discussed in this book are combined to create an episode that is both entertaining and educational. Elaine Perkins wrote this drama to promote the overall message that people can help themselves to a better life. This particular episode discusses two different ways that people can improve their lives: by becoming literate and by trying new agricultural techniques, such as the artificial insemination of livestock.

 Life in Hopeful Village originally was written in Jamaican English. The episode presented here has been translated into standard English, but an excerpt from the original script (see page 178) gives readers a flavor of the original language. Annotations on the right-hand side of each page analyze the important elements of the script. This episode exemplifies all of the following essential features of a well-constructed serial episode.

Writer's Check List of Essential Features in a Well-Constructed Episode

h **Entertaining main plot**. The main plot revolves around a conflict that has no connection with the serial's message: an argument between two neighbors, Littlejohn and Sawyers, over land rights. The audience is intrigued by the fight between the two characters and tunes into the serial week after week to find out who will win. At the same time, this plot allows the serial's message—improvement comes through self-help—to be introduced naturally.

h **Relevance**. The audience can see, through the things that happen to Littlejohn, the value of being willing to improve one's own life.

h **Hook.** The episode starts with a hook, that is, a short line or action that commands listeners' attention. It uses the element of surprise or an unanswered question to intrigue audience members and keep them listening.

h **Scenes.** The episode is divided into five scenes so that it can explore more than one plot and more than one stage of the same plot. Most of

the message information is presented in the middle portion of each scene, where the speeches tend to be longer and move more slowly. The opening and closing speeches of each scene are short and quick.

h **Scene links**. The scenes are smoothly linked together to make it easy for the audience to keep track of events and actions. Likewise, the first scene is linked to the end of the previous episode.

h **Settings.** The settings of the various scenes are quickly and easily established, either with sound effects or with a few descriptive words in the dialogue.

h **Characters' personality**. Listeners quickly can recognize the predominant personality trait of each character, even if they have never heard previous episodes of the drama. Personalities are revealed through what the characters say, what they do, what others say about them or to them, and how they react to situations.

h **Names.** Characters address one another by name, especially in the opening lines of a scene, so that the audience is left in no doubt about who is speaking to whom.

h **Action.** The episode opens with action: action recalled (last week's court decision and bar fight), action anticipated (the continuing court case), and immediate action (an argument between Littlejohn and Sawyer).

h **Emotion.** The theme of the entire episode is the universal emotion of love: the love between husband and wife and the loving support of community members for one another. At the same time, each scene evokes its own particular emotion, such as pride or fear. These changing emotions keep the audience involved and interacting with the drama throughout the episode.

h **Message.** The episode's two messages, the importance of literacy and the value of new scientific farming methods, are introduced naturally, subtly, and gradually.

h **Audience appropriateness.** The settings, the story, the characters, the language (see the original script in Jamaican English on page 180), and the message presentation are suited to the audience for whom the serial is designed.

h **Narrator.** The narrator introduces and closes the episode, but does not bridge scenes or explain actions during the episode. That is all done naturally through the dialogue.

h **Music.** Music is used sparingly: at the beginning and end of the episode and when there is a major scene change. There is no need for mood music because the dialogue indicates the emotional tone of each scene.

h **Sound effects** (FX). Sound effects are used judiciously and naturally, not as decoration to make the serial more attractive. Rather, the drama's attraction comes from the personalities and actions of the characters. Where sound effects are essential, as in the final scene of the episode, they are all the more effective because they have not been over-used in other scenes.

h **Cliffhanger.** The episode ends with a cliffhanger: a suspenseful finale that leaves the audience eager to know what is going to happen next. This motivates listeners to tune in to hear the next episode.

h **Word pictures.** Throughout the episode, the writer uses evocative word pictures to help the audience visualize the scene and follow the action. Some of the characters use similes and local proverbs in a perfectly natural way.

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Life in Hopeful Village		Page 1 of 10	
Episode #36		Draft: Final	
Writer: Elaine Perkins		Date: July 1992	

OPENING NARRATION

1.   Narr: Imagine that! Litigation upon litigation! Not five minutes after the judge decided the case against him last week, Littlejohn went straight to the clerk of courts and filed an appeal. Yes! This will make the fourth time that he and Sawyers have been to court over that little slip of land that divides their two properties. Talk about bad feelings! Remember last week, when the two of them scuffled in the bar across the way (FADE OUT)

The opening line immediately "hooks" the attention of the listeners.

This is followed by a brief summary of the previous episode, and a reminder of the main characters, before moving directly into the action of the new episode.

SCENE 1

2.   Cut in tape last one minute of episode 1288. Lines 34 to 41. Mix with FX.

Scene begins with action (hook).

3.   <u>FX. SCUFFLES. SHOUTS. PEOPLE BREAKING UP A FIGHT.</u>

4.   LJ: You are an unconscionable thief!

5.   SAW: (SHOUTING) If you weren't so illiterate!

Message (illiteracy) introduced naturally and then dropped temporarily.

6.   MISS B: Make them stop, Mr. Roy. I appeal to you.

*Personality traits of characters are revealed: **Littlejohn** (major character)—headstrong; proud; victim of his own pride and circumstances. **Sawyers** (villain)—takes advantage of Littlejohn's weaknesses (illiteracy and pride). **Miss Birdie** (Littlejohn's wife)—wise counselor and loving supporter. **Roy**—practical; self-controlled.*

7.   ROY: Come on, Littlejohn.

8.   LJ: Let me go!

9.   ROY: You're my friend. I'm talking to you. Keep still.

10.   LJ: This man Sawyers moved my land marker. It's inherited land that my parents left me when they died. HE poisoned my animals.

11.   SAW: Your goat was chewing down my young peas.

12.   LJ: Downed the star apple tree where my umbilical cord is buried. He chopped it down! Rooted it out! And worked black magic on the judge to make him rule against me. Well, so help me Almighty God, there's no hymn that allows that. If it costs the last cent I have....If I have to sell my shop.

***Culturally appropriate** references to traditions that the audience understands.*

13.   MISS B: Don't swear an oath, Littlejohn.

14.   LJ: (CONTINUING) If I have to starve...walk around in sack cloth and ashes.

Bulk of information delivered in middle of scene...slower, longer speeches.

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Writer: Elaine Perkins   Date: July 1992

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15. SAW:	(OFF) Illiterate old fool. Couldn't even read the summons.	*Message is revealed through natural events. The main **conflict** is not over illiteracy but over land.*
16. VOICE:	Go away, Mr. Sawyers. (PULLING HIM AWAY) The judge gave you the verdict. Go away!	*Emotion*. *Predominant emotion is anger.*
17. SAW:	(GOING) Illiterate and ignorant. You shall pay for your rudeness.	
18. LJ:	(GOING AFTER HIM) We'll see who'll pay!	
19. MISS B:	(ALARMED) Littlejohn! Hold him, Mr. Roy.	*Scene ends on note of **suspense**. The conflict between Littlejohn and Sawyers has not been solved.*
20. ROY:	Control your temper, man. (CALLING OFF) Hey! Go on your way, Mr. Sawyers. It takes two to make a quarrel.	
21. MISS B:	Yes, and whom God blesses, no man can curse.	
22. VOICE:	Come now, Sawyers. You have the upper hand. Don't throw it away.	
23. LJ:	(CALLS) Every unfair game has to be played over. You hear me, Sawyers. Run from me if you like, but you can't run from God.	
24. MISS B:	That's right!	*Scene transition is marked by the fading footsteps indicating that everyone has left the place and gone somewhere else.*
25.	FX. FOOTSTEPS FADING OUT. PEOPLE GOING.	

SCENE 2

26. ROY:	(RELIEVED) Well, sir, what a performance. It's enough to send up my blood pressure. Let's have a soda. Barman.	*Roy's words immediately identify the setting.*
27.	FX. RAPPING ON BAR COUNTER.	*Tension drops after excitement of first scene.*
28. LJ:	Don't want anything to drink. I'm going to my place.	
29. ROY:	All right. Pick up his bag and come along Miss Birdie. We have to stop at my place first.	
30. LJ:	I'm not stopping anywhere. I have my own business to attend to.	
31. ROY:	Remember your promise to give me a hand today. My cow's set to drop her calf anytime now.	
32. MISS B:	Yes, Littlejohn, you did promise.	
33. LJ:	I don't have the mind to do anything like that today.	

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34.	ROY:	I left her this morning lowing like thunder corked up in a grave.

Figure of speech (simile) is typical for a person in this culture.

35.	LJ:	I've never yet heard of or seen a cow serviced with an injection. Bound to give birth to a seven foot monster, or a thing with three heads. It can't be good.

Sub-plot is revealed and secondary theme, artificial insemination, is brought in very naturally.

36.	ROY:	Well the man from the Agricultural Department said....
37.	LJ:	Cha! White collar type. Like the judge there. What do they know about anything? I told you to mate that cow with my Redpole bull...then you would be sure of getting a first rate calf. But no! Artificial insemination, hah! But maybe you believe what Sawyers says...that I'm illiterate. That's why you never count on my advice.

*A new **conflict** is introduced, this time between Roy and Littlejohn.*

Longest speeches and bulk of information are contained in the middle of the scene.

38.	ROY:	Illiterate? Littlejohn? You? Hie, Miss Birdie...bear me witness.... Doesn't the entire district of Tydedixon hang on every word from this man's mouth?

*__Characters__ reveal themselves further. Littlejohn is the **doubter** as well as being stubborn. Roy is the **seeker** after new information. Miss Birdie's support of Littlejohn encourages the audience to see the good in him.*

39.	MISS B:	On the word of the Bible! Littlejohn was born brilliant. His mother ate nothing but fresh fish when she was carrying him.
40.	ROY:	Just the same, the Bible says you're never too old to learn. And I want to upgrade my stock....Get a better breed. Understand me, Miss Birdie?

__Overall theme__ of improving your own life is repeated.

41.	LJ:	I'm going to lodge a complaint about what took place here today...with the Supreme Court. We'll see who's illiterate...when I sign my name. Hmm! Have you got the court order, Birdie?

__Emotion__ of pride is present throughout the scene.

42.	MISS B:	Right here in my purse.
43.	LJ:	Let's go then. I have to study it from top to bottom.

The tension mounts towards the end of the scene. The conflict between the two men is unresolved, and the audience is left with the question, "Will Littlejohn help his friend or not?"

44.	ROY:	So what about my cow, Littlejohn?
45.	LJ:	The extension officer got you into this. Let him get you out. Come on, Birdie.
46.	MISS B:	You go on...I'll catch up with you.
47.	LJ:	(GOING OFF) He who won't listen must suffer.
48.	FX. DOOR BANGS IN DISTANCE.	

The scene transition is marked by Littlejohn banging the door behind him. It is clear that Birdie and Roy did not leave the scene.

SCENE 3

49. MISS B: Allow him to cool his temper, Roy. You know how he blows hot and cold.

A short scene that re-establishes the two conflicts that are occurring, with Miss Birdie at the center of each.

50. ROY: Why is he taking his anger with Sawyers out on me, Birdie?

51. MISS B: Littlejohn loves you like his own flesh and blood, but....

*Predominant **emotion** is fear.*

52. LJ: (WAY OFF. CALLING) Birdie...

53. MISS B: (CALLING) Coming... (TO ROY, QUICKLY) Send a message if anything happens.

54. ROY: (SIGHS) I only want to improve my stock. And I believe the extension officer. But so many people are waiting to laugh me to scorn. And now Littlejohn is joining them, and I'm starting to doubt myself. Worrying that I'm making a mistake...that my only cow is going to die.

Roy expresses the doubts that would be in the minds of many of the listeners as they contemplate the new behaviors the story is recommending.

55. FX. DOOR BANGS AS BIRDIE GOES OUT.

56. ROY: All right. (TO HIMSELF. UPSET. SIGHING) The Bible says a good friend is better than a pocketful of money, but I guess HE never had to deal with Littlejohn. Barman, serve me a soda. Then I've got to hurry and find that extension officer.

A touch of humor as Roy admits that probably even God wouldn't know how to deal with Littlejohn.

Scene ends with unanswered question of whether or not Roy has done the right thing.

57. MUSIC. BRIDGE MUSIC UP :05. CROSS FADE TO FX IN NEXT SCENE.

***Music** is used here to bridge the scenes because the next scene is the major scene of the episode.*

SCENE 4

58. FX. DOOR OPENING. FOOTSTEPS ENTERING ON WOODEN FLOOR.

After the quietness of the previous scene, the action picks up immediately. The FX suggest several things happening at once.

59. MISS B: (COMING IN) I am going to open the shop, Littlejohn. Don't want them to think we're ashamed or hiding because you lost the court case.

60. LJ: No! Tell them to go and buy from Mr. Chin Fah.

***Conflict** begins right away as Littlejohn refuses to open the shop.*

61. MISS B: There's no sense in turning away business like that all the same.

62. LJ: I can just see Sawyers bawling out to the crowd that I don't know A. From B.

This scene delivers the major part of the message: helping yourself to a better life—in this case through literacy—in a natural, non-didactic manner. Miss Birdie takes five approaches with Littlejohn, stressing the message in different ways:

63. MISS B: You've only yourself to blame for that.

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64. LJ: Look here, Birdie.

65. MISS B: (PLUCKING UP COURAGE) Littlejohn, no one can calculate dollars and cents like you. You can pick and pluck and add and subtract. All you need is a little polishing. But you just stiffen your neck and stop up your ears. Look, even four and five year old children can spell C-A-T, cat; R-A-T, rat...and read "Dan is the man in the van." You could do it, too, and better. But no. You are too big! Look at when the literacy program started...look how many people I have taught. Old men walking with canes....Miss Katy, with her back bent with age.

1. She appeals to his pride.

66. LJ: Look here, my love...

67. MISS B: (CONTINUING) Twenty years ago...from the time we got married...I bought books...I bought pencils...I've been down on my knees to you.

69. LJ: It wasn't a thing I could decide so simply.

70. MISS B: False pride. That's what's in your way.

71. LJ: A man can have a good life...make money...get respect...for himself from other people...without having to be able to read and write.

72. MISS B: Your mouth says one thing. Your heart says another.

73. FX. RAPPING ON DOOR. VOICE CALLING FOR SERVICE.

74. MISS B: Do you hear that?

75. LJ: (IMPATIENT) Hypocrites.... Backbiters.

76. FX. FOOTSTEPS FADING OFF. THEN DOOR OPENING.

77. LJ: (WAY OFF. ANGRY.) Shop's locked. Call tomorrow.

78. FX. DOOR SHUT. FOOTSTEPS COME IN. CHAIR DRAGGED ACROSS FLOOR.

79. LJ: (AS IF SITTING. SIGHS WEARILY) I don't know....I just don't know.

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80.	MISS B:	I don't think it makes much sense to spend good money...go through all that constant pushing and pulling. Every time the lawyer writes you a letter you have to dip into your pocket...just to take Sawyers to court over three feet of land...year after year. Do you think it's worth it?
81.	LJ:	I stand on principle, Birdie.
82.	MISS B:	For Jesus' sake, husband. Think about it. Don't throw good money after bad.
83.	LJ:	That man shamed me to my face.
84	MISS B:	You behaved shamefully this morning. If you would let me teach you to read and write, you wouldn't have a secret to hide. Remember how I held your hand and taught you to write your name? Do you remember, Littlejohn? All the promises you made to continue, you never kept. Yet you claim to believe in progress.
85.	LJ:	I never wanted anything in life that I couldn't get with my own hands.
86.	MISS B:	God's truth! But, suppose you could read better...eh? Imagine the heights you could reach....Imagine....With your brains! Reading all those books like the ones in Parson's library. Getting all those ideas...those up... (THINKS QUICKLY) You know, Parson has a book... "Six and Seven Books of Moses." I've heard that the Pope in Rome has one just like it in his palace. Oh yes, and that's why those men are so smart and powerful. They know about the Seven Keys to Power from their reading.
87.	LJ:	Cha!
88.	MISS B:	There's not a man in this world who can beat you when it comes to brain power, Littlejohn. A little book learning put with your natural brilliance, and millions of people could come to this little island just to look at you. Even school children in England know that much. You didn't hear what Roy said this morning, did you?
89.	LJ:	(SNEERING) Roy! Hah! (AMUSED) Watch how he's going to lose that cow today!

2. She appeals to his pocket.

3. She appeals to his sense of honesty.

4. She appeals to his intelligence.

This scene evokes a wide range of emotions: anxiety anger, pride, and love.

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90.	MISS B:	The dog barks for his supper. The pig howls for his life. Even the frog is not amused when he sees his life at stake.
91.	LJ:	You've gone too far now. STOP!
92.	MISS B:	Stop? When I feel in my heart that you really don't want to learn. Stop, when I see your eyes, your whole face in church. When the parson calls out the Bible verse, and you start to fumble all over the page, moving your fingers up and down as if you were blind. Rolling your eyeballs like bone dice...pretending! Feeling ashamed. Feeling less than other people.
93.	LJ:	Ah, don't break your neck over it. Go and get the court paper.
94.	MISS B:	You're a hard man, John Littlejohn. Hard and cruel to yourself. But as people used to say...you can take a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. Now, where on earth is my purse? (SEARCHING) I thought I put it here.
95.	FX. FOOTSTEPS FADING OUT.	
96.	ROY:	(OFF. CALLING DESPERATELY). Littlejohn. For God's sake!
97.	MISS B:	(OFF) It's Roy.
98.	LJ:	Don't worry about him. Find the court paper.
99.	ROY:	(CALLING) You're going to be the death of my only cow.
100.	LJ:	(DISGUSTED. CALLING BACK) Call the expert. I'm not a cow doctor.
101.	MISS B:	(URGENT PLEA) From Tydedixon to Salem, not a man can handle calf birthing better than you, Littlejohn. Besides, you and Roy go a long way back. He helped you dig your mother's grave.
102.	ROY:	(STILL OFF) Littlejohn!
103.	MISS B:	I'll go.
104.	LJ:	Birdie!
105.	MISS B:	Now people will know you really are ignorant.
106.	FX. FOOTSTEPS RUNNING OFF. DOOR SLAM.	

Side notes:

5. Miss Birdie appeals to Littlejohn's emotions.

The audience recognizes that Littlejohn's real problem is his own stubborn pride. They recognize a typical human frailty and they are eager for him to overcome it.

*The first **climax** of this episode is reached when it seems that Miss Birdie will not be able to find a way to make her husband change his behavior.*

But the tension of this main scene builds even further, as the second climax of the episode is revealed—
Littlejohn's apparent willingness to desert his friend in his hour of need.

Miss Birdie makes one last appeal to Littlejohn, and then leaves him in disgust.

The scene ends on a high point of tension: how will Littlejohn react to his wife's insult and to his friend's need?

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107. MUSIC. BRIDGE TO NEXT SCENE.
CROSS FADE TO FX IN NEXT SCENE.

SCENE 5

108. FX. COW MOOING LOUDLY. ROY
STRAINING TO DELIVER CALF. MISS
BIRDIE BREATHING HARD AS SHE
TRIES TO HELP. CONTINUE FX
THROUGH SCENE.

The excitement begins immediately with the opening lines of this final scene.

109. MISS B: Did you call the extension officer?

110. ROY: Yes, but he's traveling outside the parish. Hold the rope hard.

The suspense builds and builds as the audience waits to learn if the calf will be born safely without Littlejohn there to help.

111. MISS B: I AM holding it.

112. ROY: (TO COW) Bear up, Daisy. Bear up. We'll soon deliver you. You'll soon get some relief. (TO BIRDIE) It's her first calf, and she's scared.

The audience sides with Miss Birdie and Roy as they struggle to get by without Littlejohn. At the same time, the audience experiences a sense of sincere disappointment that Littlejohn has let himself down so badly with his friend.

113. MISS B: It's the same thing with women. I remember when I had my first baby. It was the same time of day as this... I was barely seventeen years old...and...

The sound effects are essential to this scene to convey the picture of the suffering cow and the human beings struggling to help her.

114. ROY: Wait! I think it's coming...it's coming. Hold her!

115. FX. COW IN LABOR. BIRDIE AND
ROY STRAIN HARDER.

116. MISS B: (STRAINING) Ohhiee! It looks as if it's too big, Roy. She doesn't have the strength to deliver it.

117. ROY: Pull!

*The **emotion** of fear is heightened.*

118. FX. STRAINING. COW MOOING. ETC.
THEN SILENCE.

119. ROY: Oh, Father in heaven. You mean I'm going to lose my one cow?

*The **climax** of the scene. If something doesn't happen right now to save the cow, she will die, and all Roy's dreams will be destroyed with her.*

120. LJ: (STRIDING IN) Move over there! This is my job.

121. MISS B: (RELIEVED) Littlejohn! I knew you would come.

122. ROY: Thank you, Jesus.

123. LJ: Stand back. Give me room!

124. ROY: (EAGERLY) Yes...yes.

125. MISS B: I told you he would come, Mass Roy.

The tension lets up slightly as Littlejohn arrives. The listeners are delighted that he has overcome his personal stubbornness and come to his friend's rescue—but the question still remains: Has he come in time?

12

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126. <u>FX. COW MOOS OCCASIONALLY.</u>
   <u>HOLD THROUGH SCENE</u>

127. LJ: Good girl! Good girl! That's it...
   That's it.

128. <u>30 SECOND AD LIB AS COW GIVES BIRTH.</u>
   <u>ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM ALL</u>
   <u>THREE.</u>

129. MISS B: (HAPPY) It's a little bull, Littlejohn.

130. ROY: (IN WONDER) A champion.

131. LJ: Don't talk too soon.

132. ROY: (LAUGHS HAPPILY) It works,
   Littlejohn. Artificial insemination works!

133. LJ: Make sure the calf can get up before you
   start boasting.

134. ROY: (ANXIOUSLY NUDGING CALF).
   Come on, son, stand up....Stand up!

135. <u>FX. ANIMAL MAKING EFFORT.</u>

*The **resolution** of the immediate crisis of this scene occurs with the safe birth of the calf.*

136. MISS B: Ooh, look at him. He's rising up....He's
   standing.

137. ROY: (ENCOURAGING CALF) That's it.
   Rock and come back, baby. That's my
   boy. (HAPPILY) Look at the markings,
   Littlejohn. That is what you call a first
   rate upgraded Holstein.... Look at the
   size of the back leg. My mother Jemima!
   What have you got to say about artificial
   insemination of cows, now, my boy? Eh?
   What have you got to say about this
   injection calf?

138. LJ: I reserve my opinion.

Nevertheless, the crisis of Littlejohn's illiteracy has yet to be met.

139. ROY: You learned a thing or two here today,
   eh?

140. LJ: Well the Bible says, the more you live,
   the more you learn.

141. MISS B: That's the living truth, darling....
   Straight out of the good book.

142 <u>MUSIC. BRIDGE TO CLOSING NARRATION.</u>

FINAL NARRATION

The scene ends on a very positive note, and a sense of joy, BUT...

142.   NARR: In no time at all the news of Roy's bull calf spread all around town...from Tydedixon to Mount Moria...from Salem to Glengoffe. Next day, the extension officer was back in the office. Everybody wanted to hear more about the injection calf. People came to look ...to stroke their chins...and marvel. Littlejohn was not among them. For early the next morning, before the cock started to crow to call the morning, before the dew left the grass, he harnessed the mules and rode quietly away through the morning mist. Rode away to town!

And it wasn't until weeks later that everybody realized what Littlejohn was up to...By that time, for certain people, it was too late!

144.   <u>MUSIC. SIGNATURE MUSIC TO END.</u>

In the final narration, two new questions are raised: Why has Littlejohn gone to town? What do the final words of the narration imply?

The audience is left wanting to know WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT.

END OF EPISODE

12

Original Version of *Life in Hopeful Village*

This is the opening of the same episode as it was originally written in Jamaican dialect.

1. NARR: Now imagine a thing as this! Litigation upon Litigation. Not five minute after the judge decide de case against him last week, Little john step straight downstairs to the clerk o'court and file an appeal. Yes! This will make the fourth time him and Sawyers fight law over dat little slip of land that divide them two property. Talk about bad feelings. Remember last week when the two of them buck up in the bar cross the way? (FADE OUT).

2. TAPE. LAST 1 MINUTE OF EPISODE 1288. WHEN LITTLE JOHN COLLARS SAWYERS. SCUFFLES, SHOUTS, ETC. MIX WITH PRE-RECORDED FX BAR. VOICES. PEOPLE BREAKING UP THE FRAY. OVERLAP WITH FOLLOWING:

3. LJ: You is an unconshanable tief!

4. SAW: (SHOUTING) If you wasn't so illiterated.

5. MISS B: Make them stop noh Mass Roy, I appeal to you.

6. ROY: Come on, Mass Littlejohn.

7. LJ: Let me go, Mass Roy.

8. ROY: You is my friend, man. I am talking to you. Stand steady.

9. LJ: Dis man Sawyers move my land-marker. Tief land dat my old people dead and left. He poison my dumb things.

10. SAW: You goat was nyaming dung my young peas.

11. LJ: Down to the star apple tree my navel-string bury under. He chop dung. Root out. And turn round obeah the Judge to mek him rule against me. Well, so help my almighty God. No Sanky don't sing so. If it is the last farthing I have. If I have to sell out me shop.

12. MISS B: Don't tek no oath, Littlejohn.

13. LJ: (CONTINUING) If I have to starve me belly...walk round in sack cloth and ashes.

Chapter Summary

- A well-constructed serial episode attracts and holds the audience's attention by opening with action or a hook, involving the audience emotionally, presenting an entertaining plot, and concluding with a cliffhanger.

- An Enter-Educate serial introduces the message into the story naturally, subtly, and gradually; demonstrates the relevance of the message; and expresses the message in language, story, settings, and characters that are suitable to the audience.

- Good script writing makes it easy for the audience to follow the story by linking scenes smoothly together, establishing settings quickly, making characters' personalities clear, letting characters address one another by name, and using evocative word pictures.

- Good script writing makes limited use of narration, music, and sound effects.

12

Chapter Thirteen

The Value of Editing

Scriptwriter, Script Editor, and Project Manager review a script.

Learning Objectives

- To appreciate the importance of careful script editing.

- To understand how to edit opening narration.

- To understand how to edit a scene to increase momentum.

- To understand how to edit a scene to heighten emotion.

Exercise

After reading this chapter, complete the exercise in editing that begins on page 197. Make use of all that you have learned through studying this book.

Topics in This Chapter

❖ **The need for careful editing**

❖ **Editing to strengthen opening narration**

❖ **Editing to heighten scene momentum**

❖ **Editing to clarify scene emotion**

❖ **Editing to show rather than tell the message**

❖ **Editing exercise**

The Need for Careful Editing

The greatest writers in the world always edit or revise their work several times before presenting it to the public. The Enter-Educate writer needs to edit carefully on two levels: message content and story structure. Message content can be checked against the requirements of the design document. To check the dramatic effect of the story, many writers like to work with a script editor who can help with suggestions for strengthening plot and development.

The following examples show how careful editing can improve important aspects of the script. Two versions of each script excerpt are presented: the original appears in the left-hand column, and an edited—and strengthened—version is in the right-hand column.

Editing to Strengthen Opening Narration

The opening narration of each episode poses a special challenge for the writer, who must help new listeners catch up with a serial's story and immediately involve them in the drama.

The following narrative from the Indonesian radio drama, *Butir Butir Pasir di Laut (Grains of Sand in the Sea)*, briefly introduces two main characters and sets the scene to come.

Original Version	**Edited Version**
1. <u>MUSIC. OPENING THEME</u>	1. <u>MUSIC. OPENING THEME</u>
2. NARR: His name is Basuki. In his 40 years of life he has remained single. As to his economic condition, it is considered more than satisfactory, because he holds a good position in the company for which he works. He owns his own house, even though it was given to him by his parents. God knows why Basuki continues to live in the same house with his housemaid and nanny, Mrs. Wiro, as he has done since he was a little boy. Mrs. Wiro knows very well what he wants. She may be very old, but she is agile enough that she can still perform her duties as a house-maid. She has only one drawback—she is forgetful. Her forgetfulness gets Basuki confused and makes him very angry. So, what's happening in the life of this Basuki? Let's follow Basuki's conversation with Mrs. Wiro on this particular morning.	2. NARR: There's trouble in the Basuki house today. There always is trouble in the Basuki household, because 40-year-old Basuki is a spoiled and pampered well-to-do bachelor who still lives with Mrs. Wiro, the nanny-housemaid he has had since his baby days. Basuki has no patience with old Mrs. Wiro's forgetfulness, especially first thing in the morning when she brings him his breakfast and he's in his usual foul mood.

The edited version grabs the attention of new listeners and draws them into the story more quickly by shortening the recap, eliminating unnecessary information, and hinting at the conflict to come. The word "trouble" was added to the first line to suggest action at the outset of the speech. The vital information about Basuki's life and personality is revealed quickly and is connected to the forthcoming action of the drama.

The audience is told very quickly everything they need to know even if they have heard no previous episodes:

- There are two people in the scene, Basuki and Mrs Wiro;

- The relationship of the two characters to each other;

- The time and place of the scene;

- The possible trouble that is about to ensue; and

- How the personalities of both characters contribute to the coming trouble.

What the audience is not told, but is eager to find out, is exactly what trouble is going to follow when Mrs. Wiro takes breakfast to Basuki.

13

Editing to Heighten Scene Momentum

Keeping the momentum going in a scene that is delivering important message information can be difficult, as the following scene illustrates. In this excerpt from the Pakistani radio series, *Sukhi Ghar (Happy Home),* a health worker, Shaista, comes to consult an important village member, Chauhdri, about a scheme for providing women with a simple income-generating business. In the previous episode, Shaista tried to convince Chauhdri and his wife that their ten-year-old daughter, Razia, is too young to be engaged and certainly too young to be married. Chauhdri was prepared to listen to Shaista's arguments, but his wife was not. (In the interest of space, the name Shaista has been abbreviated to Shai in the script, and Chauhdri to Chau.)

Original Version	Edited Version
1. SHAI: Chauhdri, I have to consult you.	1. SHAI: Chauhdri, I have to consult with you.
2. CHAU: Please do.	2. CHAU: Please do.
3. SHAI: I desire to start a commercial training center for women in Sukhi Nagar.	3. <u>FX. CHILD SCREAMING. GENERAL COMMOTION.</u>
4. CHAU: What do you mean, center? What would they do in this center?	4. SHAI: Whatever is that terrible noise?
5. SHAI: Skilled craft work…knitting, sewing, basket making…things like that.	5. CHAU: Just Razia…she's a very willful child. Always screaming and carrying on. So, what did you want?
6. CHAU: They already do that in their homes.	6. SHAI: I desire to start a commercial training center for women in Sukhi Nagar.
7. SHAI: Yes, but if they were to bring their goods to my shop in town they would sell easily and make a good side income for the women.	7. CHAU: What do you mean, center? What would they do in this center?
8. CHAU: Why ask me, my son? You and the local women should discuss it.	8. SHAI: Skilled craft work…knitting, sewing, basket making…things like that.
9. SHAI: I am asking you because we need a suitable place for such a center, and I would like to use your premises.	9. CHAU: They already do that in their homes.
10. CHAU: That sounds fine. I'll ask my wife. Our back yard is vacant. You can use that, and I'm sure my wife will want to be involved also. But I must warn you of something…	10. SHAI: Yes, but if they were to bring their goods to my shop in town they would sell easily and make a good side income for the women.
11. SHAI: What is that?	11. <u>FX. CHILD CRYING LOUDLY AND CALLING OUT "NO."</u>
12. CHAU: People here…what they have not done before, they hesitate to start…they have suspicions and misgivings.	12. SHAI: She doesn't sound happy, that little Razia. Is she upset about her engagement?
	13. CHAU: She's always like that when she contradicts her mother. It is nothing, it will pass. But…back to your idea…why are you asking ME about it?

Original Version	**Edited Version**
13. SHAI: I understand. We are all bound by traditionalism...customs and conventions. It may take time to shake them off.	14. SHAI: I am asking you because we need a suitable place for such a center, and I would like to use your premises.
14. CHAU: But, we will listen to the advice of a prudent person, such as you. We should adopt that which is advantageous to us.	15. CHAU: That sounds fine. I'll ask my wife. Our back yard is vacant. You can use that, and I'm sure my wife will want to be involved also. But I must warn you of something...
15. SHAI: I hope I can help.	16. SHAI: What is that?
16. CHAU: You have helped us understand that even if we have engaged our 10-year-old Raiza to be married, we should defer the marriage till she comes of age.	17. CHAU: People here...what they have not done before, they hesitate to start...they have suspicions and misgivings.
17. SHAI: Chauhdri Sahib, I hope you can now convince your wife.	18. SHAI: I understand. We are all bound by traditionalism...customs and conventions. It may take time to shake them off.
18. NOORI: (ENTERS BREATHLESSLY) My mother has sent me to get both of you to come right away.	19. CHAU: But, we will listen to the advice of a prudent person, such as you. We should adopt that which is advantageous to us.
19. SHAI: We're coming.	20. SHAI: I hope I can help.
20. NOORI: Razia was trying to jump into the well. Mrs. Chauhdri held her by one arm, and sister-in-law held her by the other.	21. CHAU: You have helped me understand about Raiza. Even if we have engaged her at ten years of age to be married, we should defer the marriage till she comes of age.
21. SHAI: Come along, Chauhdri Sahib. It is now imperative that we go. The matter has apparently become serious.	22. SHAI: Chauhdri Sahib, I hope you can now convince your wife. I am very worried about that little girl.
22. CHAU: This is what happens when you engage a mere child at a tender age, and the mother will not listen. Why not allow time for the boy and the girl to understand each other? Let there develop discretion between the two youngsters. No need to hurry.	23. NOORI: (ENTERS BREATHLESSLY) My mother sent me to get both of you to come right away.
	24. SHAI: We're coming.
	25. NOORI: Razia is trying to jump into the well. Mrs. Chauhdri is holding her by one arm, and sister-in-law by the other. Please come.
	26. SHAI: Oh, my God. Now perhaps Mrs. Chauhdri will listen. Quick, Let's go, we must save her.

13

The original version expressed little or no emotion, and the excitement at the end of the scene came too late to keep the audience involved. The edited version grabs the audience's attention earlier, provides a sense of caring that invites an emotional response from the audience, and suggests that there is more to the lives of the characters than being mouthpieces for the drama's message.

- The first sound effect (FX) of the child screaming was added to tie this episode to the previous one and to demonstrate that, in reality, life does not occur in discrete, separate events. One event does not stop just because another one is occurring. The question of Razia's engagement has not gone away just because Chauhdri and Shaista are now discussing a women's center. The sound effect also adds some suspense to the scene, since the audience cannot tell whether it is simply a child being naughty or a hint that a serious dramatic conflict is about to erupt.

- Razia's story involves the audience in the scene, even if, at this stage, the idea of a women's center is not particularly interesting to them. They are hooked into the scene to find out how it will end. At the same time, they are absorbing, even if inadvertently, the beginning of the message on the value of women's income generating groups.

- Sound effects are added later in the scene to maintain the suspense and to give Chauhdri and Shaista the opportunity to repeat, in a perfectly natural way, the message from the previous episode.

- The new ending is a cliffhanger. When the episode ends, the audience does not know whether Razia will be all right. They must tune in again next time to find out what will happen. It is not necessary that every scene contain such a potentially unhappy ending, but every scene should contain some spark of real life, some suggestion that there is more to the lives of the characters than being mouthpieces and recipients of the message.

Editing to Clarify Scene Emotion

Emotion is vital for audience involvement, but how does the writer add emotion to a scene that, on the surface, is no more than a conversation between two characters? This is the problem in the following scene from the Nepali Distance Education Series, *Service Brings Reward*. The characters include:

Kamala (abbreviated as KAM), the health worker in Pipaltar village;
Seti, A respected older woman of the village;
Rama, Sister-in-law to Seti, who lives in another part of the country; and,
Madhukar (abbreviated as MADHU), the post's health assistant.

Namaste is a Nepali word of greeting used when people meet or when they part. Nani is a term of affection used by an older woman speaking to a younger woman.

Original Version	Edited Version

Original Version

1. KAM: Namaste, Auntie.

2. SETI: Namaste, nani.

3. KAM: Oh-ho, why did you come to see me today?

4. SETI: It is not I alone, nani. I have brought a friend.

5. KAM: Who is she? I don't recognize her.

6. SETI: My sister-in-law, Rama.

7. KAM: Ehh, namaste.

8. RAMA: (SHYLY) Namaste, sister.

9. KAM: We haven't met before.

10. SETI: She has come home for a visit after many years.

11. KAM: And is everything all right, Auntie? Oh, I even forgot to tell you to sit. Please, come, let's sit here.

12. FX. CHAIR BEING PULLED OUT. PEOPLE SITTING.

13. KAM: Are you having any problems, Auntie?

14. SETI: We have come to ask you something, nani.

15. KAM: Tell me...what is that? I'll answer your questions if I can. If I can't, I'll try to solve your problems by getting help from others.

16. SETI: O.K. Ask her what you want to ask.

17. RAMA: You ask her, Bhauju. I don't know how to ask.

18. SETI: Now, how can I know? What is there to feel shy about with Kamala nani? We came for that purpose only.

19. RAMA: You ask her yourself, Bhauju.

20. KAM: Can I also address you as "Auntie"? Don't feel awkward. If you are having problems, it is better for you to ask.

21. RAMA: I feel awkward.

22. KAM: I am also like one of the family members. You can ask Aunt Seti. I often go to her place. Tell me, what is the matter?

Edited Version

1. KAM: Namaste, Auntie.

2. SETI: Namaste, nani. Are you busy today?

3. KAM: Yes, indeed, Auntie, it is a very busy day. But I always have time for you.

4. SETI: I have brought Rama to visit you. She is my sister-in-law.

5. KAM: Namaste. I am happy to meet you. I don't believe we've met before.

6. RAMA: (SHYLY) Namaste.

7. FX. KNOCK ON DOOR.

8. MADHU: (FROM OUTSIDE DOOR) Kamala, sister, there is someone to see you.

9. KAM: Thank you Madhukar. I shall be there in a moment. Now then, please sit down and tell me what I can I do to help.

10. RAMA: (QUIETLY) No...no...it is all right. You are too busy.

11. KAM: Oh, no, Auntie.... May I also call you Auntie? There is always enough time.

12. SETI: We have come to ask you something, nani.

13. KAM: I am happy to help you. Please, take your time and tell me what is troubling you.

14. RAMA: You tell her, Bhauju. I don't know how to ask.

15. KAM: That is all right, Auntie. There is no right way. Please think about it and tell me in our own words...in your own time.

16. FX. KNOCK ON DOOR. LOUDER.

17. MADHU: (BEHIND DOOR) I'm sorry, sister, but the client is insisting.

18. KAM: Madhukar, ask the client to explain what the problem is and come and tell me.

19. RAMA: We'll go.

20. KAM: No, no, please. It's all right. I am here to help you. I would be happy if you could explain your difficulty.

13

Original Version	Edited Version
23. RAMA: See, nani, I already have four children at home.	21. RAMA: (SHYLY) See, nani, I already have four children at home.
24. KAM: Yes, then?	22. KAM: Yes. I understand.
25. RAMA: I am just trying to ask if there is any method to prevent having any more children?	23. RAMA: I...I....want to ask...no, I'm too shy.
26. KAM: You are feeling awkward to ask such a good question? You have asked a very good question. You asked in time.	24. KAM: I think I can help you, Auntie. Perhaps you want to ask about not having any more children.
27. SETI: Now, what is your counseling for this, nani?	25. RAMA: (QUICKLY) I want to know if there is any method of preventing more children. Yes.
28. KAM: I want to tell you two things, Auntie.	26: KAM: You have asked a very good question. And I can help you with it.
29. <u>FX. FOOTSTEPS COMING NEAR.</u>	27. MADHU: (OFF, LOUDLY) He says it's very urgent, sister.
30. MADHU: Someone has come to see you.	28. KAM: (CALMLY) Very well, Madhukar. Auntie, this booklet has some information in it about planning family size and spacing. Please, look through this while I speak with my client. I shall be right back. I'm looking forward to talking further with you.
31. KAM: Tell them to wait for a while, Madhukar.	
32. MADHU: (OFF) Yes, madam. I'll try to make him wait.	

The edited version of this script adds a series of interruptions to the conversation between Kamala, Seti, and Rama in order to stress the theme of patience. In editing the scene, the writer had to think about the type of behavior that could communicate the underlying theme of patience to listeners. Many people become impatient when they are frequently interrupted, so the interruption device is a good way of showing Kamala's character and stressing the underlying emotion of the scene. By having Madhukhar start interrupting earlier in the scene, the writer can display Kamala's character and stress the underlying emotion of the scene.

Editing to Show Rather than Tell the Message

Too often, the writers of Enter-Educate drama feel compelled to *tell* the audience exactly what the message is and what behavior needs to change. It is often better, however, to *show* the audience what the problem is and let them try to figure out possible solutions for themselves. As the serial develops, demonstrations of new behavior can reinforce the listeners' own ideas about how to deal with the problem.

The following 12-minute drama episode was designed to be included in a 30-minute magazine program for rural adults; the general message of the program was the relationship between the environment and family planning. This was the first episode in a series of 26, and it had two purposes: first, to introduce the main characters in the drama and arouse interest in the story and, second, to introduce the overall topic of the environment and family planning. The episode's two objectives were to motivate the audience to listen to further episodes and to start the audience thinking about possible connections between environmental conditions and family size.

The following excerpt includes the first three pages of the original script, and it illustrates the style initially used to convey the message linking the environment and family planning.

Original Version

The Other Side   Page 1 of 3
Episode #1   Draft: #2
Writer: Nelson   Date: October 1996

1. MUSIC: THEME MUSIC UP :10. FADE AND HOLD UNDER.

2. ANNOUNCER: STANDARD ANNOUNCEMENT

3. MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP :05. FADE AND CUT

4. NARRATOR: This is the story of the people of Clayton, a small mountain village. You will meet many people in this story—some of them will be people just like you, and some of them may seem strange to you. You will meet Helda and her husband Jojo. I wonder if you will like them. And you will meet Sam and his wife, Juno, and you will meet many other people from the Clayton community. One of them, Percy, is thought by many people in his village to be mad, but you will find out that he really is not mad; indeed, he is probably a lot more sane than most of the people in his village. And he likes to play the guitar.

   As our story starts, there has been a disaster in a neighboring village on the other side of the mountain. Let's see what it is all about.

5. MUSIC. SOFT GUITAR MUSIC. MIXED WITH BIRD SONG.

6. HELDA: Percy....Percy...it's me....Helda....Have you heard the news?

7. PERCY: Good morning, madam Helda. No, I have not heard the news...but you look very upset. Can you tell me what has happened?

8. HELDA: It's so terrible, Percy. I heard the news on the radio just now. I always go into the store every morning, as you know, to get fresh milk for my children...and I heard the radio news this morning.

13

The Other Side **(original)**   Page 2 of 3
Episode #1   Draft: #2
Writer: Nelson   Date: October 1996

9.   PERCY: Please tell me...what did you hear, Mama Helda?

10. HELDA: There has been a terrible accident. The village of Smallwood has been washed away.

11. PERCY: The village of Smallwood...on the other side of the mountain?

12. HELDA: Yes, every house has been washed away and many people have been killed.

13. PERCY: Yes, I know.

14. HELDA: What do you mean, you know? How could you know? You were not in the store when the news came on, and you do not have a radio of your own. So, how do you know what happened there?

15. PERCY: The mountain told me, Madam Helda.

16. HELDA: Oh, Percy, that's ridiculous. No wonder everybody says you're mad.

17. PERCY: I'm not mad, Madam Helda.

18. HELDA: Well, all I can say is that I'm glad we live here, and not on the other side of the mountain.

19. PERCY: Oh, but you're wrong, Madam Helda. We DO live on the other side.

20. HELDA: What? What do you mean?

21. PERCY: Well, what I'm really trying to explain is that we all are in the same danger. This problem could just as easily happen to our village as it did in Smallwood.

22. HELDA: That's ridiculous, Percy. We are perfectly safe, here. That sort of thing could never happen in Clayton.

23. PERCY: Oh, yes, it could, Madam Helda. Just look around you. For one thing, there are too many people here.

24. HELDA: Now you sound like the health worker, Maya. Did she tell you to go around telling people how many children to have?

25. PERCY: No, Madam Helda, it's not that. Just look around you. You can see how many people are now living in our village. Too many. We have to start to think about how many people can really continue to live well on this little piece of land.

26. HELDA: Well, I don't have to stand here and listen to your madness. I'm going to the church. Preacher has called a meeting there, to pray for the people of Smallwood. And he's invited everyone in Clayton to do what they can to help. Some people can give some money; others can give whatever they can—food, clothes, maybe. I am going to the church now to find out how we can all help.

27. PERCY: I am very pleased that the preacher has called this meeting, Madam Helda. It will be good for all of us to do as much as we can to help...BUT, giving what we can to the people of Smallwood is not going to solve the problem.

28. HELDA: And I suppose you know how to solve the problem, do you, Percy?

29. PERCY: I do not know all the answers, but I do know that we have to start giving respect to the environment. We have to start taking better care of the precious resources we have, and we have to stop having so many children.

30. HELDA: Well, you can stay here and talk madness if you like. (GOING OUT) I'm going to church.

31. <u>MUSIC. SOFT GUITAR SOLO VERSION OF THEME TUNE, "THE OTHER SIDE".</u>

Scene 2:

32.   <u>FX. GENERAL MURMUR OF PEOPLE IN A MEETING.</u>

33.   PREACHER: (OFF, IN BACKGROUND) And while we're making our contributions—either here or at the Health Center, let us think about what we can do to protect ourselves and our village from this same disaster. And there are two things in particular that we can do: The first is, we must stop cutting down the trees in our area. Without trees, we will lose the soil. And the second thing is, we should really start to think about the size of our families. Sister Maya can help you if you want to know more about how to space your children, or how to limit the size of your family. Because, we must face the fact that if we do not do something to help ourselves, we too, could suffer the same fate as the people on the other side of the mountain.

The following, edited version of the script demonstrates how the script was improved to show, subtly, the impact of population size on the environment rather than simply tell the audience about the link between the environment and family planning. Several changes were made:

•   The dialogue is considerably less didactic. The speeches are shorter and crisper.

•   Listeners are given "hints" about the personalities of various characters—such as Percy—but they are left with some sense of suspense as to how the characters will develop and the reasons for their behavior.

•   The message is introduced subtly and in a way that allows audience members to begin to think for themselves about the possible causes of the villagers' problems.

•   As the story unfolds, the listeners begin to build in their own minds a full picture of the inhabitants, their relationships to one another, and the problems they face. In this way, the characters in the drama become real people to the audience, rather than mouthpieces for a didactic message.

   The edited script for the entire episode is given below to illustrate how the message gradually unfolds over the course of several scenes and how the various plots show different aspects of the message in a natural manner.

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Edited Version

The Other Side
Episode #1
Writer: Nelson

1. <u>MUSIC: THEME MUSIC UP:10. FADE AND HOLD UNDER.</u>

2. ANNOUNCER: STANDARD ANNOUNCEMENT

3. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP:05. FADE AND CUT</u>.

4. NARRATOR: It is early morning in the small town of Clayton. Soft rain is falling, the gentle rain that lingers after a heavy storm. Percy, a young man who is thought by many to be cursed with fewer brains than usual, is sitting alone watching the morning sky and playing his guitar.

5. <u>MUSIC. SOFT GUITAR MUSIC. MIXED WITH BIRD SONG.</u>

6. HELDA: (COMING IN BREATHLESS, YELLING) Oh, my God, my God.... (SEES PERCY) Percy...it's awful.

7. <u>GUITAR MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY</u>

8. PERCY: (HUMBLY) I'm sorry, I didn't mean....

9. HELDA: Not your playing, stupid. The news....on the radio. I was in the store...and the radio news...you'll never guess what happened.

10. PERCY: (SOFTLY) I know what happened, Madam Helda.

11. HELDA: You know? (SCOFFING) How could you, Percy? You don't have a radio.

12. PERCY: But I know.

13. HELDA: (SCOFFING) All right then, tell me what happened.

14. PERCY: The village...Smallwood...has been destroyed.

15. HELDA: (AMAZED) How...how did you know? No one knew until it came on the news...just now....the whole village...every house in Smallwood...washed down the side of the mountain. So many people killed. It's awful.

16. PERCY: I know, Madam Helda. The mountain told me...

17. HELDA: The mountain told...oh you're mad.... Somebody else came by and told you. All I can say is, I'm glad WE don't live on the other side.

18. PERCY: But we do...we DO live on the other side...we all live on the other side.

19. HELDA: Stupid man. Look around you. We live here...in Clayton. Smallwood is...was... (EMPHATICALLY) on the other side of the mountain...There's a meeting at the church...right now...for those who want to help...I'm going .

20. PERCY: A meeting...at the church.... That is good, that is right. We must help now. But that won't solve the problem.

21. HELDA: And I suppose you know what will...

22. PERCY: Arithmetic.

23. HELDA: Arithmetic? I swear, Percy, you get madder by the minute.... Arithmetic, he says. Talk about living on the other side! (GOING OUT) He doesn't even know where reality is.

The Other Side (edited)
Episode #1
Writer: Nelson

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24. <u>MUSIC. SOFT. GUITAR SOLO VERSION OF THEME TUNE "THE OTHER SIDE"</u>

Scene 2:

9. <u>FX. GENERAL MURMUR OF PEOPLE IN A MEETING.</u>

10. PREACHER: (OFF, IN BACKGROUND) ...And we pray to God Almighty that he will help the people of Smallwood in their distress...and that he will protect us from the same fate.

PREACHER CONTINUES HIS SPEECH WHILE JOJO AND HELDA SPEAK OVER HIM.
And I appeal to you, my friends to do all you can to help these poor people. Give what you can give...money, clothes, food...

11. JOJO: (WHISPERING LOUDLY) God helps those who help themselves...

12. HELDA: Quiet, Jojo...don't be disrespectful to the preacher.

13. PREACHER: You can make your contribution here at the church today, or you can go to the health clinic. Maya will be there to accept your donations. (PREACHER CONTINUES TO AD LIB ABOUT APPEAL UNTIL JOJO LEAVES THE CHURCH.)

14. JOJO: And to give us a lecture on family planning at the same time...I'll bet.

15. HELDA: Jojo, shh.

16. JOJO: I'm going outside. I've heard enough of this.

17. HELDA: (APPEALING) Jojo...

18. <u>FX. NOISE OF JOJO MAKING HIS WAY PAST OTHERS</u>
"Excuse me...excuse me"

19. <u>FX. CHURCH DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS.</u>

Scene 3

20. SAM: (OFF) So, Jojo, you've finally (COMING IN, SNEERING) realized that praying will not get God on your side.

21. JOJO: God is already on my side, Sam. I am an honest man. I don't steal my neighbor's land.

22. SAM: And neither do I. I've told you a million times, but you're too dumb to understand. Sometimes, I think you must be Percy's brother.

23. JOJO: Even Percy knows that it's YOUR land that eroded and slipped into MY creek. That doesn't give you the right to come across my creek and put your cows on MY land.

24. SAM: And even Percy's brother knows that my land fell into the creek because YOU built a dam for your fishing project. And your dam made the creek turn in a different direction...right into my land...and washed it all away.

25. JOJO: But, you know, as well as I do that your land was perfectly all right...for two years after I built the dam...until YOU chopped down all the bushes on the edge of your side of the water...and without the bushes...the soil washed away. I told you not to...

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26. SAM: So now, you have the right to tell me not to chop down MY trees. What am I supposed to use for firewood?

27. JOJO: Get wood from the mountain top...everyone else does.

28. SAM: Everyone else doesn't have to run a farm AND work in a factory as I do. I can't make a living on that one small piece of land.

29. JOJO: So now it's my fault that your family doesn't have enough land.

30. SAM: Yes, it's your fault and (ANGRY) I'm going to stop you if I have to kill you!

31. <u>MUSIC. SHORT CHORD.</u>

Scene 4

32. <u>FX. CLINIC NOISES...BABIES CRYING. ETC.</u>

33. MAYA: Everything looks fine, Momma Juno. You are obviously remembering to take your pill every day...and you don't have any side effects.

34. JUNO: Not like I did in the first few months...I didn't like all that extra bleeding and cramping...but you were right sister Maya. You're always right.

35. MAYA: (LAUGHING) Not always...But I'm glad I was right this time. Now you and your husband can take your time to decide if you want any more children or not.

36. JUNO: Sam says two is enough. He says he wants to have a vasectomy. But I'm not sure. My mother had eight children. It's hard for me to get used to these new ideas...

37. MAYA: As long as you stay on the pill, you won't get pregnant again, and you'll have time to think about what you want to do.

38. <u>MUSIC. PERCY'S GUITAR IS HEARD SOFTLY IN THE BACKGROUND. HOLD UNDER.</u>

39. JUNO: Is that Percy? What's he doing here? Does he come here for medicine?

40. MAYA: No, he isn't sick... He's come to...

41. JUNO: (INTERRUPTING) You mean he's mad, but he isn't sick.

42. MAYA: (LAUGHING) Percy isn't mad...he just sees things differently. He has good reason for his strange ways. But he's a good man. He's here today to help me with what people are bringing for the Smallwood disaster.

43. JUNO: Oh yes, I want to give you some money... it's not much. There is hardly enough to go around these days, but...

44. <u>FX. SOUND OF COINS DROPPED ON TABLE.</u>

45. HELDA: (COMING IN) And I've got a few clothes... baby things... It's so awful. What would we do if something like that happened in Clayton?

46. JUNO: Why do such terrible things happen?

47. HELDA: (SCOFFING) Ask him.... HE knows the answer.

48. MAYA: Who.... Percy?

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49. <u>MUSIC. MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY</u>

50. PERCY: (FAR OFF) Yes, Ma'am.

51. MAYA: It's all right, Percy....we weren't talking to you. We were talking ABOUT you.

52. PERCY: (COMING IN) And what were you saying about
                    me...may I ask?

53. HELDA: That you're mad. That you said arithmetic made the mountain slide down on top of Smallwood!

54. JUNO: Arithmetic? Percy...what on earth...?

55. HELDA: I'll bet he doesn't even know what arithmetic is. Did you go to school, Percy?

56. MAYA: Wait...wait a minute... Maybe Percy has a point. Arithmetic...numbers.... Yes, I think what
                    Percy means....

57. MAN: (OFF. RUSHING IN) Sister Maya...Sister Maya...come please...quickly. My wife...the baby is
                    coming very fast.

58. PERCY: (QUIETLY) Adding to the numbers...

59. <u>FX. CRACK OF THUNDER AND HEAVY RAIN FALLING.</u>

60. MAYA: I'm coming sir, I'm coming. (GOING OUT) Just let me get my birthing bag.

61. MAN: (GOING OUT) And bring your umbrella. It's pouring down rain.

Scene 5

62. <u>FX. HEAVY RAIN CONTINUES. HOLD UNDER NEXT SCENE. MIX WITH FX. SOUND OF
     NEWBORN BABY CRYING :03. FADE AND CUT.</u>

63. MAYA: Congratulations, sir. You have a beautiful, healthy baby boy. And your wife is doing fine.

64. MAN: Another boy. I should be a very happy man...

65. MAYA: But you're not?

66. MAN: Well yes and no. I thank God the baby is healthy... and my wife. I try to take good care of her
                    and help her in her pregnancy.... But now...four boys, and so little land.

67. MAYA: You must provide each son with land for his family.

68. MAN: It is tradition...but we have so little land now. When my father divided his land for my brothers
                    and me, there was not much each, and now... it just won't work. You cannot divide nothing into
                    four... And God is not making new land for us.

69. MAYA: No, we cannot determine how much land there will be in the world...but we can figure out how
                    many people can live on the land we have. We can help preserve the little bit we have...

70. <u>FX. BABY CRIES IN BACKGROUND.</u>

71. MAN: Look at me... a new father and I stand here complaining. (GOING OUT) I must go and meet
                    my new son.

72. MAYA: (CALLING AFTER HIM) Come to the clinic and talk to me... Perhaps it would be good if you
                    did not add to your worries with more children. (ON MICROPHONE) Percy isn't so mad after
                    all. The numbers do make a difference.

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73. <u>FX. CRACK OF THUNDER FOLLOWED BY HEAVY RAIN.</u>

74. JOJO: (RUNNING IN) Oh my God.... My God.... my land... it's all washing away. Where's Sam? I'm going to get that man if it's the last thing I do.

75. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP :05. FADE AND HOLD UNDER.</u>

76. NARRATOR: And so ends today's episode of The Other Side by Nelson. Tune in tomorrow at the same time for the next exciting episode.

77. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP :05 FADE AND HOLD UNDER ANNOUNCER.</u>

78. ANN: STANDARD CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENT

79. <u>MUSIC. THEME MUSIC UP TO END.</u>

Editing Exercise

The following script needs substantial editing before it is ready for broadcast. Read and consider carefully the changes you would make to strengthen it. The right hand column contains some starting questions. Also, consider the following points:

1. There is not enough action in the episode. Using only the characters and situations currently included, how could the action be increased?

2. The drama has only one plot. Which two characters in this episode (one who appears, and one who is mentioned by name only) could have separate sub-plots of their own? What type of plot might be devised for each of these characters that would heighten the excitement of the drama? Where in this episode could you insert a scene from each of these new sub-plots? How could you use one of the sub-plots to introduce an unexpected change in the story line?

3. How can you strengthen the episode to establish the identity of each of the characters more quickly?

4. Try re-writing at least one scene in the episode to stress a dominant emotion that will attract empathy and interest from the audience

5. This episode suggests that the major character of the drama is Sseka, a man who has twenty-two children by the time he is thirty-five. What problem does having Sseka as the major character create for the message?

6. Consider the structure of the story into which the message is blended. Does the story seem intriguing and exciting on its own, or does it exist merely to relay the message? How could you strengthen the story in future episodes?

In the interests of space, the name Nsubuga has been shortened to Nsub in the script.

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1.   MUSIC. SOFT MUSIC TO SUGGEST LIVING ROOM AMBIENCE.

Will the music alone be enough to set this scene or should the characters comment on where they are?

2.   SSEKA: (OVERJOYED) Mr. Nsubuga, I cannot thank you enough. I am bursting with happiness.

3.   NSUB: (OFF. SHOUTING IN ENGLISH) Peter, why are you crying? Go on, get out. Take it outside.

4.   SSEKA: (CALLING HAPPILY) Mr. Nsubuga, come and see what your wife Rita has done.

5.   NSUB: (OFF) What has she done?

How will listeners who missed previous episodes know what is going on?

6.   SSEKA: (HAPPILY) Come and see what your wife has done for the twins. (TO HIMSELF) The Lord has started my day by performing miracles for me.... Rita is a truly generous woman.

7.   FX. SOUND OF DOOR OPENING.

Is the opening line a strong enough hook?

8.   NSUB: (COMING IN) What has Rita done?

9.   SSEKA: Look at this heap of lovely clothes that she has given me for the twins.

Do you know who Peter is right away?

10.   NSUB: That was nice of her.

11.   SSEKA: The Lord told me never to worry about what to eat or drink.

What do you understand from this scene about the personality of Sseka and Nsubuga?

12.   NSUB: Even the birds which do not sow anything....

13.   SSEKA: (INTERRUPTING) ...eat until they are full. You know, when my wife gave birth to twins, I was overjoyed, and then I sobered up.

14.   NSUB: What made you sober up?

15.   SSEKA: (AMUSED) I was worried about where I would get the money to clothe them and feed them. (LAUGHING) Not knowing that the Lord was going to provide for them through your wife.

16.   NSUB: Your friend is in the back yard crying.

*What **action** is going on in this scene?*

17.   SSEKA: Your wife? But why is she crying?

18.   NSUB: No, I mean Peter. He is crying because his mother has given you all his old clothes.

*Map the **structure** of the scene to see if it is developing in the right way.*

Konoweeka
Episode #8
Writer: Kiyingi

19. SSEKA:	(AMUSED) Does he think he will go back to being a baby once again, so that they can fit him as they once did?...Your wife's kindness really warms my heart. Frankly, I was at a loss to know what to do.	
20. NSUB:	I say, shouldn't they be discharging your wife soon, since she did not have any complications?	
21. SSEKA:	They will discharge her either today or tomorrow, which is why I am here today.	
22. NSUB:	Do you want me to help you fetch her from the hospital?	
23. SSEKA:	(AMUSED) That, too... But the real reason I am here, is more serious than that. (LOWERING HIS VOICE) I, Ssekalegga, your brother, am in big problems.	
24. NSUB:	What kind of problems?	
25. SSEKA:	I have to go to hospital to take these clothes and then from there, I have to board a taxi to go to Nkwekwe.	
26. NSUB:	Nkwekwe? Is there a problem there?	
27. SSEKA:	You could say that. But, let us leave that problem aside for the time being, because that is not the main reason why I came today.	
28. NSUB:	So what is the main problem?	
29. SSEKA:	(LAUGHS SHEEPISHLY) I don't know how to begin... I feel quite embarrassed.	
30. NSUB:	How come?	
31. SSEKA:	(LAUGHINGLY NERVOUSLY) Don't rush me...Let me first tell you a little story, to illustrate the situation, then I shall come to the point...a long time ago...	*Does this story add to the excitement or the tension of the scene or does it slow it down?*
32. NSUB:	Yes?	
33. SSEKA:	in our neighborhood...	
34. NSUB:	Go on.	*Does it reveal something of Sseka's or Nsubuga's's character?*
35. SSEKA:	there was a man called Eriya...	
36. NSUB:	And?	

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37. SSEKA: (LAUGHING) Will you stop interrupting me like that?

38. NSUB: (JOKINGLY) How do you want me to interrupt you?

39. SSEKA: (JOKINGLY) Not more than is necessary. (BOTH LAUGH) In that village, everybody was preparing for Christmas. Those who had not had meat in a long time planned to buy it on the day....You may punctuate my narration now...(LAUGHS)

40. NSUB: (LAUGHING) All right...Go on!

41. SSEKA: People used to eat the ears of animals.

42. NSUB: (INTERRUPTING) You mean the thighs.

43. SSEKA: (AMUSED) That's right....So there is this small man, Eriya Wakyasi who lived alone in his house, and yet, every Christmas he would also buy a whole thigh of cow. (LAUGH) Then, one Christmas Eriya had to get meat on credit because he had not been prepared, and therefore had no money. Unfortunately, Luka the butcher, refused to give Eriya meat on credit, saying that Eriya should have been better organized. You can imagine the look on Eriya's face. (LAUGH) I tell you, Sir, that if he had meat that Christmas, it was at the neighbor's house.

44. NSUB: (AMUSED) There was no smell of roasting meat.

Is there a predominant emotion coming through the scene as yet?

45. SSEKA: (AMUSED) Exactly. (LAUGHS, THEN SOBERS UP) And now I come to the point of my story...Bob, my friend, I was caught unprepared. I do not have any money to look after my wife who has just delivered. I do not even have any money to pay the hospital bills.

46. NSUB: I am sorry. I do not have any money myself.

47. SSEKA: (PLEADING) The only money I have is what I am going to use to go to Nkwekwe.

Will the audience be curious about why Sseka has to go to Nkwekwe?

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48.   NSUB: Forget about going to Nkwekwe for the time being. Pay whatever you have to the hospital and pay the rest later.

49.   SSEKA: Don't be ridiculous, Bob. The hospital would never allow that.

50.   NSUB: (AMUSED) They will be able to get you when Aida goes to deliver. By the way, has it occurred to you that she might also have twins.

Will an audience who has not listened previously know who Aida is?

51.   SSEKA: (PROUDLY) That would be wonderful! Imagine me, Ssekalegga with four children in one year!

52.   NSUB: That would add up to 24 children at 35 years of age...and still going strong.

53.   SSEKA: Enough of this tomfoolery. Get me the money to collect my wife from the hospital.

54.   NSUB: My friend, not planning your family is the same as trying to build a fashionable house without a plan. Your children become a burden on society.

Is this introduction of the message natural and subtle?

55.   SSEKA: (AMUSED) It is not a lecture I need right now. It is money. I shall repay very quickly.

56.   NSUB: I told you that I do not have any money and advise you to cancel your trip to Nkwekwe, since there isn't any pressing problem there right now.

57.   SSEKA: What makes you think that?

58.   NSUB: You mean there is a problem?

Is the audience likely to be attracted to or deeply interested in either one of these characters?

59.   SSEKA: (GETTING FED UP. HE CALLS) Mrs. Nsubuga, I have to go to the hospital now, so that Peter's brothers can get something to wear.

60.   NSUB: You mean they have had no clothes all this time?

61.   SSEKA: That's right. We had brought only one garment because we were expecting only one child.

62.   NSUB: You mean to say you brought only one garment since you expected only one child.

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63. SSEKA: (AMUSED) You really are determined to get at me today, aren't you. Let me leave you. (LAUGHING)

Does the scene end on question or note of suspense?

64. NSUB: How will you go?

65. SSEKA: (FAR OFF) Just like this.

Is the scene change indicated sufficiently and clearly through the dialogue?

66. <u>FX. NOISE OF MANY NEWBORN BABIES.</u>

67. SSEKA: How are you today?

68. MRS. S: The children are suffering with the cold. Since they were born, they have never worn clothes. (DELIGHTED. SEEING THE CLOTHES). Thank you very much indeed.

69. SSEKA: Mrs. Nsubuga sent these to congratulate you on having twins.

Will the audience know that this speaker is the nurse?

70. MRS. S: It must have been. Where would YOU get so many clothes from?

71. NURSE: (COMING IN) Sir, why don't you bring some clothes for your children? They have been naked for two days now?

72. MRS. S: He has brought the clothes, nurse.

73. SSEKA: (SPEAKING AT SAME TIME AS MRS. S.) I have brought the clothes, nurse.

74. NURSE: What about clothes for your wife?

75. SSEKA: I thought you were discharging her today. I did not bring any.

76. NURSE How can she wear the dress she delivered in? We are discharging her tomorrow. (GOING OFF) So go back home and get her another dress.

77. SSEKA: (AMUSED) As though it is there!

78. MRS. S: (SORRY FOR HERSELF) You see other women with different clothes to sleep in, to change into during the day, but I have only one in which to sleep and spend the whole day in.

79. SSEKA: (THOUGHTFULLY) Actually, it occurred to me to ask Aida to lend you one of hers.

80. MRS. S: (ANGRILY) Why should she lend me one?

*Is there any **action** developing in this scene, or is the emphasis on talking?*

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Writer: Kiyingi

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81.	SSEKA:	(TRYING TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT) Which one did you say is Kato...the younger one?
82.	MRS. S:	(STILL ANGRY) Can't you see which one is bigger?
83.	SSEKA:	Is Kato the bigger one?
84.	MRS. S:	(ANGRY) Did they tell you that Kato is usually bigger?
85.	SSEKA:	(AMUSED) How would I know these things? It is my first time to have twins. Do you know how surprised people get when I tell them that at the age of 35 I have 22 children?
86.	MRS. S:	I think you heard the nurse say that I am being discharged tomorrow.
87.	SSEKA:	(PRETENDING NOT TO HEAR) Has your brother been to see you?
88.	MRS. S:	Yes he came, and he was very angry to find the twins naked. It's a pity that his money will go to waste.
89.	SSEKA:	What do you mean?
90.	MRS. S:	He said he would bring me some baby clothes either today or tomorrow.
91.	SSEKA:	I have to go now. I have to go to Nkwekwe.
92.	MRS. S:	What about the hospital bill tomorrow?
93.	SSEKA:	I shall be back by then...But if they discharge you before I come, then ask your brother to pay, and I shall refund it.
94.	MRS. S:	No, no, give it to me now.
95.	SSEKA:	(ANGRILY) They will calculate the total tomorrow, so until then, we will not know how much it is.
96.	MRS. S:	No, no. Give it to me now.
97.	SSEKA:	(ANGRILY) Don't you know that my children in Nkweke are on their own with no adult to look after them? I have just received a message to say they are ill, so what do you expect me to do? (GOES OFF MUTTERING ANGRILY)

What has been learned so far in this scene about the personality of Mrs. S.?

What is the predominant emotion of this scene?

Does the scene transition indicate where the next scene will be?

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Konoweeka

Episode #8

Writer: Kiyingi

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October 1996

98.	MRS. S:	(CALLING LOUDLY) Are you leaving already?
99.		FX. TAXI RUNNING AT HIGH SPEED
100.	SSEKA:	Driver, slow down! Some of us have armies of children who we're not ready to leave yet.
101.		(GENERAL LAUGHTER)
102.	ZAK:	(LAUGHING) You tell him! He is fond of over speeding.
103.	SSEKA:	Watch the speedometer, driver....So, Zakayo, where are you going? To Kiganda?
104.	ZAK:	Yes.
105.	SSEKA:	Do you have a home there, too?
106.	ZAK:	No, I'm just going to visit. Where did you say you were going?
107.	SSEKA:	To Nkwekwe. I have a home there.
108.	ZAK:	I did not know that.
109.	SSEKA:	Yes, sir. I have a home in Bunamwaya as well as in Nkwekwe. But, recently I sent my first wife packing, and I am in the process of installing another wife in my Nkweke home. By the way, did you know that my third wife has just had twins?
110.	ZAK:	No, I did not know that. Praise the Lord.
111.	SSEKA:	Now I am not a mere Ssekalegga, I am a Ssalongo!
112.		(GENERAL LAUGHTER)
113.	ZAK:	I notice that even your wife Aida is almost due.
114.	SSEKA:	That's right. Who knows, in a short while I might have another set of twins! (LAUGHS) Then I shall have 24 children. Aida has six children, Mamma Jane had six before the twins, and my other wife in Nkwekwe left me with 8! Twenty-four children at the age of 35! (LAUGHS)
115.	ZAK:	Did your wife in Nkwekwe die?

Is it possible to identify by sound alone that a car is going very fast?

What is the disadvantage of setting a whole scene inside a taxi?

Does the repetition of the news about the twins enhance or delay the story?

Is the audience likely to have developed any empathy or sympathy for any of these characters by now?

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116. SSEKA: No. I sent her packing. The reason I am going there now is to find another wife to look after the children there. (LAUGHS) And I have already found her. I am going for the introduction ceremony. She is a young girl of 18 years, and I am confident that she will also give me many children. I tell you Zakayo, the Lord has really blessed me.

117. ZAK: (AMUSED) Yes, I can see your corpse will do you proud at your funeral.

118. JOHN: (SPEAKING AS ZAKAYO SPEAKS) Excuse me, sir.

Will the audience be curious about who this voice is, or will they be frustrated by not knowing?

119. SSEKA: Ssh, Zakayo. Yes, sir?

120. JOHN: How many children did you say you had?

121. SSEKA: At the moment I have only twenty-two, but soon I will have twenty-three or twenty-four.

122. (GENERAL LAUGHTER)

123. JOHN: How do you feel?

The character of John seems to have been brought in only to teach the message. Does there appear to be any other purpose for his presence? What can the audience learn of his personality from this scene?

124. SSEKA: (PUZZLED) What do you mean? I don't feel anything. I just thank the Lord...

125. ZAK: (JOINING IN) That's right.

126. JOHN: Are you a very rich man? Can you provide for them all adequately?

127. SSEKA: What do you mean? I may not be a rich man, but what was I to do, since the Lord decided to give me all these children?

128. JOHN: You should not be hiding behind what you think the Lord is doing, as opposed to what he wants you to do. Did you not say that you are going to...what is the name of the place?

129. SSEKA: Nkwekwe.

130. ZAK: (SPEAKING AT THE SAME TIME) In Nkwekwe.

131. JOHN: And you said you had thrown out your wife who used to live there, and you are planning to put another in her place?

132. SSEKA: (PROUDLY) That's right.

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133. JOHN: And you expect this new wife also to give you many children?

134. SSEKA: (JUMPING IN) She is still very young...She will be able to.

135. JOHN: Are you financially able to provide for all these people adequately?

136. SSEKA: I would advise you to direct the question to the Lord. If it is his wish that my children live, then they shall live.

*What **action**, if any, is developing in this scene?*

137. JOHN: What I meant was, can you feed them, clothe them, and educate them properly?

138. SSEKA: Let me repeat what I said earlier, that it is the Lord who can answer the question.

139. JOHN: The Lord created us all to be good and useful people. Unfortunately, some of us have different ideas. That is why some people become thieves, others murderers.

140. SSEKA: Then, who creates the thieves and murderers?

141. JOHN: The people themselves, and this annoys God very much, just as you are doing.

142. SSEKA: (DEFENSIVELY) How?

How realistic is Sseka's reaction to John?

143. JOHN: Producing a family which you cannot support. It is like trying to get a harvest out of an unplanned garden. You cannot collect a good yield.

144. SSEKA: Who are you?

*Is there any predominant **emotion** developing in this scene?*

145. JOHN: Just call me John. Having more children than you can afford means you cannot look after yourself or your wives properly. It is like building a house without first drawing a plan.

147.   SSEKA: Stop beating about the bush and tell us exactly what you want us to hear.

*What is the audience likely to see as the **dramatic conflict** of this drama?*

148. JOHN: Raising a family without using Family Planning is like building a house without a plan.

149. (EVERYONE LAUGHS)

150. SSEKA: Driver, stop the taxi!

151. ZAK: Is this where you are going?

152. SSEKA: (VERY EXCITED) No, we haven't reached the place yet. But this girl we have just driven past...she is the one I was telling you about marrying, and taking to my house in Nkwekwe. Stop, driver! Don't take me too far past my heart's desire.

153. (GENERAL LAUGHTER)

END OF EPISODE

*Is there any sense of suspense or **cliffhanger** at the end of this episode?*

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Chapter Summary

■ After completing a script, Enter-Educate writers must check the accuracy and completeness of the message content against the requirements of the design document.

■ Writers should review the story structure, development, and dramatic impact of the draft script and strengthen them if needed by:

- Involving new listeners in an ongoing serial;
- Maintaining momentum in scenes that primarily convey message information;
- Conveying emotion in scenes with little action; and
- Subtly incorporating the message into the story pose special challenges for Enter-Educate writers.

Glossary

This list defines the words and phrases used in this book that have particular meanings in the context of radio drama for social change. Each definition is followed by the number of the chapter in which the word or phrase is first used or is described most fully.

actor	A male or female person who portrays or acts the part of a character in a drama. (Chapter 1)
advocate	One who supports, speaks in favor of, or recommends to others a particular attitude, action, or practice. (Chapter 4)
announcer	The speaker who introduces a radio program on behalf of the radio station. Sometimes referred to as station announcer, this person is not a character in the drama. (Chapter 3)
audience profile	Information about the audience's lifestyle, culture, economic status, and community that gives the writer a personal sense of the listeners; included in the Writer's Brief. (Chapter 2)
brief	See Writer's Brief, below.
central uniting character	A character, such as a doctor, nurse, or health worker, who appears in and unites all the plots in a serial and carries the message through all the plots. (Chapter 6)
character	A fictional person created for a story or drama; may also be an animal or a thing. (Chapter 6)
character profile	A list of all the details the writer should know about a character in order to portray him or her as a unique and believable person. (Chapter 5)
cliffhanger	A suspenseful finale to a serial episode that leaves the audience eager to find out what will happen in the next episode. (Chapter 3)
climax	The point in a story where the conflict has come to a crisis and something must happen to resolve it. (Chapter 3)
conflict	See dramatic conflict, below. (Chapter 3)
cover sheet	The front page of a script that lists the serial title, program number, writer's name, purpose and objectives of the program, cast of characters, and music and sound effects needed for the episode. (Chapter 11)
crisis	The point in a story where the conflict has reached its height and must be resolved. (Chapter 3)
cue	In interactive instruction segments, a cue is a prompt that signals the listening audience to expect a question which they should try to answer orally. (Chapter 9)
design document	An extensive document containing all information with regard to the design and content of the serial. (Chapter 2)
design team	A group of specialists, including script writers, who work together to plan all the details of a radio serial and who prepare the design document. (Chapter 2)

denouement	See resolution, below.
development	The portion of the story following the introduction during which the dramatic conflict develops and intensifies. (Chapter 3)
dialogue	The words that the characters utter in a drama. In radio drama, the dialogue must provide listeners with an understanding of location, personality, and action as well as the message. (Chapters 3 and 7)
diffusion theory	Communication theory that states that social networks and interpersonal communication are largely responsible for spreading new ideas and behaviors and for determining how people judge them. (Prologue)
director	The person who directs the actors and technicians in the studio recording of the serial. In some countries, the director is called the producer. (Chapter 2)
distance education	Education for students who cannot attend class because they live too far from an institution of learning or for some other reason. Distance education can be provided by correspondence courses or through electronic media such as radio, television, and computers. (Chapter 2)
distributed learning	The process of spreading learning throughout a radio serial, with particular attention to pace and repetition. (Chapter 2)
drama	A story acted out on stage, radio, television, or film (Chapter 3)
dramatic	Strongly effective to the point of exaggeration, for example, "There was a very dramatic moment in the story when the king had to choose between his throne and his wife." Also means related to drama, e.g., "The story will be told as a dramatic presentation rather than as a novel." (Chapter 3)
dramatic conflict	The twists and turns and juxtapositions of life that are reflected in drama and provide its central interest as the audience becomes emotionally involved in why things happen and how they will turn out. (Chapter 3)
efficacy	Confidence in one's ability to carry out a behavior. Grows with direct personal experience and with vicarious experience gained by observing real people or characters in a drama. (Prologue)
Enter-Educate	A format that blends entertainment and education to disseminate social messages. The use of this term originated with Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services. (Chapter 1)
episode	Individual programs into which a serialized radio or television drama is divided, usually broadcast once a week. Also known as an installment, an episode of a radio drama is similar to a chapter in a book. (Chapter 3)
episode treatment	Description of scene divisions, action, settings, personalities of characters, and emotions to be stressed in an episode as well as the point of suspense on which each scene and the episode itself will end. (Chapter 8)
event list	A list of the major events needed in the story of an Enter-Educate drama to allow the message to be brought in naturally and subtly. (Chapter 4)
flashback	A scene from a past time that interrupts the present action of a drama. (Chapter 6)
format	The form or design of a radio or television program; includes interview, talk, drama, and news shows. (Chapter 1)

Four Ts of Teaching	A quick way to remember the order in which a lesson is usually delivered: Tell, Teach, Try, and Test. (Chapter 2)
FX	Abbreviation for "sound effects" commonly used in a script to indicate where sounds should be included. Sometimes written as SFX. (Chapter 8)
header	Standard information listed on the top of every page of a script, including the program number, date of writing, writer's name, and page number. Also known as script header. (Chapter 11)
hero	The principal "good" male in a literary work or dramatic presentation. (Chapter 6)
heroine	The principal "good" female in a literary work or dramatic presentation. (Chapter 6)
hook	Exciting opening dialogue or action that commands the immediate attention of the audience with an element of surprise or shock and keeps them listening. (Chapter 1 and Chapter 3)
host	The person in a radio program who acts as a go-between for the audience and the program; often takes on the role of teacher, inviting the audience to listen for particular information and conducting interactive question and answer sessions with the listeners. (Chapter 6)
independent drama	A drama that starts and completes a story within a single program, usually no more than 60 minutes long. (Chapter 3)
installment	See episode, above.
interactivity	Audience involvement with a radio program; includes oral replies to questions, mental or emotional response, physical activities, and post-program activities. (Chapter 9)
location map	Map of the village or town where a plot's main scenes are set; drawn by the writer to ensure consistency in description of distances, travel time, etc. (Chapter 6)
map	A grid or table resembling a family tree that shows how characters featured in different plots within a drama are related or connected. (Chapter 5)
message	The information to be given to listeners in order to motivate and enable them to make changes that will improve the quality of their lives and that will alter social norms. (Chapter 1)
message factors	Characteristics of a message that make it appropriate and effective for a particular audience, such as its language, length, sequence, repetition, and use of fear, humor, or logic to make its point. (Prologue)
measurable objectives	The outcomes that project planners hope the audience will demonstrate as a result of listening to the radio serial. These outcomes generally fall into three categories: what the audience will know; what attitude they will have to the topic, and what behavior they will practice. (Chapter 2)
modeling	See role models, below.
mini-series	See series, below.
mood music	Music that is designed to inspire a particular mood in listeners and should be avoided or used very sparingly in radio drama. (Chapter 7)

music	Music should be used carefully in radio programs so that it does not interfere with or contradict the dialogue. (Chapter 7)
narrator	A person who tells a story; frequently used at the beginning of a radio serial to remind the listeners of what happened in the previous episode and at the end to encourage listeners to tune in again next time. (Chapter 6)
non-characters	People who appear in a radio program but are not characters in the drama, such as the host and narrator. (Chapter 6)
P Process	A diagrammatic representation of the necessary steps in preparing and implementing a successful communication project for development. (Chapter 1)
parasocial interaction	Audience members behave as if fictional characters were real people, talking back to them during the broadcast or sending them letters and gifts. (Prologue and Chapter 9)
persuasion theory	Communication theory that states that psychological characteristics (such as knowledge, attitudes, and preferences) affect a person's perception of and response to messages. (Prologue)
pilot programs	Programs created before regular scripting begins in order to test format, characters, and message presentation on a sample of the audience. (Chapter 10)
PLR	Abbreviation of "pause for listener response;" indicates a moment's silence to give listeners time to respond to an interactive question. (Chapter 9)
plot	The chain of events and web of personal relationships that make up a story or drama. (Chapter 3)
plot chart	A chart that keeps track of events that must be referred to more than once during a story. The chart shows which episode first mentions an event and which episodes should bring the matter up again. (Chapter 8)
producer	The person who manages and oversees all aspects of a media project, including finances, staff hiring, office procedures, and time lines. Also known as the program manager (see program manager, below). May be used interchangeably with director in some countries (see director, above).
program manager	The person in overall charge of a radio series; sometimes called the Executive Producer or Program Director; see producer above. (Chapter 2)
pro-social	Contributes to the welfare of a society or community. (Chapter 1)
purpose	Reason(s) for undertaking a project; the approach the project will take to encourage the audience to adopt new behaviors. Chapter 2)
real time	The idea that the action within a scene should occupy the same length of time that the scene takes to broadcast. (Chapter 6)
reasoned action, theory of	Communication theory that states that people carefully weigh the benefits and disadvantages of a new behavior and perceived social norms before adopting it. (Prologue)
resolution	The part of a story following the crisis which shows how the crisis is overcome. (Chapter 3)
role model	Real person or fictional character who demonstrates new behaviors and whom others choose to copy. (Prologue and Chapter)

scene	A subdivision of a dramatic episode that is set in a specific place and time; one episode of a drama may contain several scenes. (Chapter 3)
script	Written transcript of the words, music, and sound effects that will be used in a radio program; also indicates actions and dialogue for television programs. (Chapter 1)
script header	See header, above. (Chapter 10)
script lay-out or presentation	Method used to record a script on the page; a standard lay-out procedure makes the script practical and easy to use. (Chapter 11)
script review panel	The small team of people who review every script of a serial for production quality, technical content, and/or dramatic quality. (Chapter 2)
script support team	The people selected by the design team to provide the writer with necessary information and support during the script writing process. (Chapter 2)
segment	Part of an educational program, such as an interactive questioning segment inserted between two drama scenes. (Chapter 9)
serial	A multi-episode drama in which the story continues from one episode to the next. (Chapter 3)
series	A collection of short dramas which share several of the same characters; each episode contains a complete story. (Chapter 3)
setting	The time and place where the action of a drama is set. (Chapter 3)
Seven Cs of Communication	The essential principles of communication on which radio serials for development are based. (Chapter 1)
signature tune	Music played at the beginning and end of every episode in a serial which the audience grows to recognize; may be abbreviated as "Sig. Tune;" also known as theme music. (Chapter 3)
situation comedy	A type of drama series that is exaggeratedly humorous. (Chapter 3)
slate	Oral identification of a program's number at the beginning of the tape on which it is recorded; derived from film production practice of writing the program number on a slate and holding it in front of a camera to be recorded. (Chapter 11)
soap opera	Common name for a serial characterized by melodrama, stereotyped characters and situations, exaggerated emotions, and maudlin sentimentality; in contrast to an Enter-Educate serial which is closer to real life. Term was coined in the United States of America in the early days of radio drama when big American soap manufacturing companies (such as Lever Brothers) sponsored sensational serials that were likened to classical opera. (Chapter 3)
social learning theory	Communication theory that states that people learn by observing the behavior of others and, if the results are good, trying the behavior themselves. (Prologue)
sound bed	A continuous sound effect that is played quietly under the dialogue throughout a scene. (Chapter 7)
sound effects	Sounds, either recorded or made live in the studio, that are used to add a sense of reality to the drama and help listeners "see" the action and the setting. (Chapter 7)

source factors	Characteristics of a message's source that make it interesting, relevant, and persuasive for a particular audience member. In radio drama, these are the credibility, attractiveness, similarity, and authority of the character who delivers the message. (Prologue)
speech	Lines spoken by the actor in a radio or television drama (Chapter 11).
Steps to Behavior Change	The five stages that people commonly go through when moving from one type of behavior to a new and markedly different behavior; consists of knowledge, approval, intention, practice, and advocacy. (Prologue)
story	An event or series of events that can be either true or fictional; may be presented in a narrative, a drama, a poem, or a song. (Chapter 3)
sub-plot	A lesser story line woven into the main story or plot of a serial drama in order to enrich it and to help convey the message to the widest possible audience. (Chapter 3)
synopsis	See treatment, below.
theme	The emotional focus of a drama, which reflects a universal moral value or emotion that is understandable to all people at all times, such as truth, courage, love, fear, greed, or envy. (Chapter 3)
theme music	See signature music, above. (Chapter 3)
treatment	Narrative outline of all the plots (main plot and sub-plots) of a radio serial that is written before scripting of individual programs begins. (Chapter 3)
unity of place	Assigning each plot in the drama an established location or setting in which the action of that plot most often occurs. (Chapter 6)
unity of time	Careful adherence to a pre-determined and limited amount of time between the beginning and end of the serial's story. (Chapter 6)
word pictures	Carefully chosen words (such as verbs, adjectives, or adverbs) and figures of speech (such as similes and metaphors) that assist the listener to "see" what is taking place in the drama. (Chapter 7)
Writer's Brief	Specific information given to the writer about the objectives, purpose, and message content of the series; part of the full design document. (Chapter 2)

Index of Script Excerpts and Other Samples

Credits

The following list shows the names of serials from which extracts have been taken for this book, together with the name of the writer and the name of the country in which the writer works:

Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth, by Kuber Gartaula from Nepal
Family Affair, by Fred Daramani from Ghana
Four Is Our Choice, by Fabian Adibe from Nigeria
Grains of Sand in the Sea, by a team of writers from Indonesia
Happy Home, by Ashfaq Ahmad Khan from Pakistan
Heart to Heart, by Parvez Imam from India
Service Brings Reward, by Rameshwar Shrestha from Nepal
Tale of a Village (Goi Geramer Goppo), by Humayun Ahmed from Bangladesh
Think Ahead, Plan Ahead (Konoweeka), by Wycliffe Kiyingi from Uganda

Other extracts were taken from the work of students or were written especially for this book.

Photographs by Harvey Nelson, except Chapters 9, 12, and 13 by JHU/CCP.

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