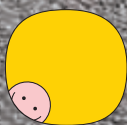


# WORST YEAR OF MY LIFE AGAIN

## STUDY GUIDE



AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S  
TELEVISION FOUNDATION

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## Introduction

The Study Guide for the Series **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** is predominantly relevant to the Literature Strand of the English Curriculum, allowing the students to respond to, examine and create their own literature. It provides opportunities for classroom teachers to explicitly teach the components of digital literacy. Students are able to analyse the Director's choices to gain a greater understanding of the effect the editing process has on enhancing the visual narrative. The study guide allows the teacher to explore issues prevalent in today's teens in a non-threatening and humorous way. It encourages the students to relate to their own personal experiences and have mature discussions on issues based around the consequences of stereotypes, cyber bullying and moralistic decision making.



## Curriculum Links

The **Worst Year of My Life, Again! Study Guide** has been written for upper primary and lower secondary students. This resource provides interdisciplinary tasks that explore and evaluate a television series as well as providing a platform for students and teachers to explore and develop a range of elements from the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities such as personal and social capabilities and ethical understanding. It aligns with the Australian Curriculum in the areas of English, the Arts (media), Humanities and Social Sciences and Health.

Teachers are encouraged to choose teaching and learning experiences that best suit the needs and abilities of their students. Teachers should use their professional judgement to decide how much of the content to address with any particular class and modify and adapt as necessary.

The **Worst Year of My Life, Again! Study Guide** supports the vision for 21st Century learning with activities that support the development of the skills, knowledge, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the future.

Opportunities are provided within the Study Guide to promote the development of specific skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, self-direction, creativity, communication and collaboration skills. The tasks allow the students to engage in the processes of listening, speaking, reading, viewing and writing. Teachers are advised to choose tasks that are age-appropriate. The Study Guide provides a flexible scaffold for students to develop, apply, analyse, synthesise and evaluate the following elements:

- Compare the ways that language, gestures and images are used to create protagonists, antagonists and stereotypes.
- How language is used to express opinions, and make evaluative judgments about people, places, things and texts.
- How language used for different formal and informal social interactions is influenced by the purpose and audience.

- How texts reflect the context of culture and situation in which they are created.
- Identify and discuss main ideas, concepts and points of view in spoken texts to evaluate qualities, for example, the strength of an argument or the lyrical power of a poetic rendition.
- Recognise and analyse the way that characterisation, events and settings are combined in the television series **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** and discuss the purpose and appeal of the approaches.
- Investigate ethical issues by understanding and comparing the language and images that are used to create characters and how these can influence the audience's emotions. Students are encouraged to draw on a range of personal examples to substantiate personal views expressed.
- Make connections between culture and environment when exploring ethical issues provided.





## Curriculum Links

- Experiment with different narrative text structures to develop an understanding of the impact that these techniques have on an audience's experience.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of how communication technologies are used to enhance stories and to critically analyse the Director's editing choices in the series **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**.
- Develop a working knowledge on how media language is used to portray stories and explore the codes and conventions that are manipulated to create meaning.
- Reflect and evaluate how digital technologies have expanded the role that the media plays in everyday life and develop a critical perspective on the influence media has on society.
- Identify key issues affecting young people and connect with these on a personal level to design problem solving strategies that will generate sustainable solutions that the students will be able to actively use to improve their own social situations.
- Support a positive sense of self-worth by developing, valuing and reflecting on the students own wellbeing by comparing and contrasting personal experiences to those of characters in this series.
- Use **Worst Year of my Life, Again!** to identify and critically discuss illustrations of moral dilemmas, social dilemmas, personal dilemmas.
- Create a wide range of texts, make presentations and actively contribute to class and group discussions.
- When writing, the students will demonstrate an understanding of grammar, select specific vocabulary and use accurate spelling and punctuation, editing their own work to provide structure and meaning.
- Use a range of software to create, edit and publish texts.

## Series Synopses

They tell you school days are the best years of your life. But what if they weren't? And what if you woke up one morning to discover you had to relive the most excruciating 12 months of high school all over again? **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** is a 13-part comedy series for every child who's tried to take control of their life.

Alex King (Ned Napier) has had a horrible year – humiliated by his teachers, targeted by bullies and embarrassed by attempts to impress the most popular girl in school, Nicola Grey (Lana Golja). So when he wakes up on his birthday to discover that somehow time has reset itself, he can't believe he must relive every miserable moment of the past 12 months once more.

At first Alex is horrified by the prospect but slowly he begins to see the possibilities it throws up. If the universe has decreed he gets a second chance at this year then maybe this time he can get it right... maybe this time he can make it the best year of his life and win over the girl of his dreams... or at the very least, bearable! And so with the help of his closest friends – Simon Birch (Laurence Boxhall) and Maddy Kent (Tiarnie Coupland) – that's exactly what he's going to try and do.

**Worst Year of My Life, Again!** is a comedy about friendship, destiny and second chances.





## Character Profiles

### ALEX KING (Ned Napier)

Alex, 14, is a born optimist which is a good job because fate is about to conspire to knock every sliver of positivity out of him during his 'worst year'. He's confident enough in himself to think that someone like popular girl Nicola Grey might actually go out with him, although he knows he has to work to impress her. He's friends with Maddy because they grew up together as next-door neighbours, and deep down he finds her oddness endearing (not that he'd ever tell her that!). He's more into soccer than AFL, and is genuinely good at it (unlike his best friend Simon who just pretends he is!). Along with a love of soccer, Simon and Alex enjoy a shared love of tearing each other down. What kind of mates would they be if they didn't laugh at each other's misfortunes?

Despite his endless misfortune, Alex isn't a downbeat person and he's also slow to learn the lesson that he really can't change fate. He's resigned to his lot in life and bears the slings and arrows with a dry, sardonic, self-deprecation and an ongoing belief that next time, things will be different. He's funny and likeable, with an admirable dose of stamina and fortitude. While many people would be crushed by the ordeal of having to live over their nightmare year again, for Alex it becomes a welcome opportunity to fix the mistakes of the past, and become the Alex King he was meant to be. Ned describes Alex as an ideas man. "Whenever a plan fails, he always has a backup. He takes time to learn important life lessons, but eventually works out to put his family and friends first."



### SIMON BIRCH (Laurence Boxhall)

Simon, 14, was born in England but has lived here for almost two years. He'd describe himself as 'cool', 'streetwise', 'athletic' and 'popular'. Whether anyone else would agree doesn't faze him: his shallowness is matched by his self-delusion. He has no shame in lying about his abilities and is narcissistically unaware of how obvious the lies are. He's not a bad person, or a particularly bad friend. Sure, sometimes he laughs at Alex's humiliations, but only because they're funny! And only as long as he's not humiliated as well. At the end of the day, he's (mostly) there when Alex needs him... and if his friend's Nostradam-like abilities also happen to help him too, that's just an added bonus.

Simon and Maddy are very much friends-in-law and find it difficult to communicate without Alex around. Simon gets Alex's obsession with Nicola but considers himself way above mere schoolboy crushes. In his eyes, he's a man and therefore needs a mature woman who'll be his intellectual equal – someone like Alex's sister Sam. "While Simon learns many of the same lessons that Alex does, he also learns that pursuing something wholeheartedly will lead to success."



## Character Profiles

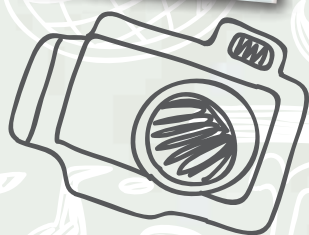


Maddy

### MADDY KENT (Tiarnie Coupland)

Maddy, 14, has been Alex's next-door neighbour for as long as they both can remember. She's one of his oldest friends – and very much an irritating thorn in the side to the image-conscious Simon. She's a bright but eccentric girl who seems to drift through life utterly unencumbered by the woes and worries that trouble everyone else. She's a daydreamer who can find magic in unexpected places whilst at the same time remaining utterly underwhelmed by it all. So Alex's bizarre announcement that he's stuck in some kind of temporal loop comes as no surprise to her. She duly appoints herself as his guide through this weird world and, more importantly, as his 'voice of reason'.

Maddy's crush on Alex has developed in the last year or two. As kids, they played together constantly and it's not surprising that when Maddy's teenage hormones kicked in it was Alex who became the object of her 'love' fantasies... She likes the status quo, and just wishes he could see how deep their friendship is rather than pining after the superficial Nicola. Actor Tiarnie Coupland says throughout the series, Maddy learns to accept that Alex is just a friend and that she can't control everything. "If it's meant to be, it's meant to be!"



### MR NORRIS (Syd Brisbane)

Mr Norris is the school maths teacher and year head. He has no love for students and views his occupation as a 'job' rather than a 'calling'. He is contemptuous of just about everyone (including other staff members) and speaks with both cold, piercing sarcasm or rage-fuelled yelling.



### PARKER (Xander Speight)

Parker is the school bully. He's interested in nothing except getting out of school work and making sure he brings vengeance on anybody who crosses him. He generally won't fear consequences for his actions unless they involve having to stay at school longer than he needs to. He has no friends other than Howe and shows little interest in wanting any. His full name is Teddy Parker, but kids at school have quickly learnt to never use his first name, unless they enjoy having their head shoved down a toilet. Xander says Parker is very confident in himself, until he gets firmly put in his place, which completely confuses him.



Mr Norris



Parker



## Character Profiles

### HOWE (Liam Erck)

Howe is Parker's best mate and also a school bully... though there's a sense he probably wouldn't be if he wasn't hanging around with Parker. In fact although he usually does as Parker says and isn't opposed to threatening people, he also has a weirdly soft side that often comes out when he's thinking aloud... in particular he seems very keen on cuddly animals, unicorns and making his mum happy! He's not especially bright and is easily confused. His slightly off-the-wall insights into situations often mean that he is on the same plane as Maddy. "Howe is a follower", says Liam. "You could say his mind isn't really connected to his mouth, as he blurts out random thoughts, much to Parker's embarrassment."



Howe

### NICOLA GREY (Lana Golja)

Nicola is the school-belle and queen-bee. Traditionally beautiful and ultra-cool. Head of the netball team... probably head of just about everything else too. She's popular with teachers, parents and students alike. Basically everyone loves her. But she's not a bimbo; she does very well at her studies. Her aspirations are to be an actress. She's essentially a nice person but can be prone to temper fits if someone crosses her. "Nicola sees something in Alex that her A-listed friends do not", says Lana. "Over the course of the series, she learns to give the 'nerds' second chances."



Nicola



Nicola's Gang

### LOREN (Kaiting Yap)

Loren is part of Nicola's entourage. Not quite as attractive as Nicola... Not quite as cool... Not quite as smart... But getting there! She's part of the school A-List and endorses everything Nicola does. She is much more of a nasty character than Nicola though, and is prone to viewing everyone who isn't part of their clique as being losers. She has no real interest in anything outside of fashion and popularity. "Loren is an acolyte to Nicola in every sense", says Kaiting, "but eventually learns that she doesn't need Nicola as much as Nicola needs her."

### AMY (Jessie Blott)

The third member of the A-List entourage... Quieter than Loren she tends to just follow the other two and do as she's told. She's got a sweet nature, which comes out when Nicola and Loren aren't around. "Amy has a small secret crush on Alex but she'd never admit this", says Jessie. "She's mean and kind of intimidating, but does have a nice side."



## Character Profiles

### HANNAH (Bellamy Duke)

Hannah is TALL, very tall – hence her nickname ‘Big Hannah’. She’s a very sweet and pleasant girl who is a little self-conscious about her height. She’s probably an average student and generally gets on well with everybody though doesn’t fall into any particular clique. She has very sensitive feelings which can easily be hurt, but then bounces back just as quickly. When anyone shows her some positive attention, she responds with enthusiasm. It also means she’s built up a strong resistance to any negative attention and is more inclined to bite back than run away if she feels under attack. Her favourite time of year is Easter because she loves chocolate!

### TOBY (Fergus McLaren)

Toby is a slightly weedy boy who constantly tries hard to please – he wants to be everyone’s best friend, teachers and students alike, and succeeds in being nobody’s! He poses no great threat to anybody so is never particularly bullied or picked on... if anything, he’s just ignored. He always seems to be getting into some scrape or other – often the result of Alex’s action. He has no real instinct of how he’s perceived.

### TROY (Kingsley O’Connor)

Troy is the year level heart-throb. He’s captain of the football team and an athletic superpower in all other sports. With the exception of Maddy, he is fancied by every girl in their class ... but nowhere near as much as he fancies himself. While he’s got good looks and charm in bucketloads, his personality is bland and uninteresting.

### ALEX’S MUM (Annie Jones)

Devoted to her family, Alex’s Mum is an excitable, sweet woman who thinks her children are the most amazing creatures and almost can’t believe she had a hand in making them. She loves festivities and will go to town decorating the house for every holiday or anniversary she deems special – from the logical, like Christmas, to the ‘unique’, like the first-year anniversary of Alex and Samantha’s first steps... She still views her offspring as ‘her babies’ and is quite oblivious to any embarrassment this might cause them!

### ALEX’S DAD (Jeremy Stanford)

Dad is a typically male sports-loving blokey bloke who would be completely lost without his wife and would only be able to exist on barbequed food. He tends to keep quiet around the house unless he’s being told to say or do something by Mum. He loves his children but has so little in common with the current generation that he never really knows how to communicate with them properly: he misses the time when they were young and thought the world revolved around him.

### SAMANTHA (Arielle O’Neill)

Samantha, 17, is Alex’s older sister... and is perpetually irritated and embarrassed by him. She’s cool and fashionable – she would probably have been the Nicola equivalent when she was in their year. She has a similar sardonic wit to Alex but is far more self-conscious about herself than him. She considers herself ‘grown up’ and Alex a ‘child’ despite the fact there’s only three years difference. She goes to the same school as Alex but will never deign to talk with him or even look at him if they cross paths there (which they rarely do).



Alex's Parents



Samantha





## Episode 1

### Happy Birthday

Alex's (Ned Napier) 14th birthday gets off to a terrible start. He pours perfume down his shirt, gets a heap of dud presents from his family AND his mum is planning the dorkiest "surprise" party ever. But despite all this, Alex confidently declares to his best friends, Simon (Laurence Boxhall) and Maddy (Tiarnie Coupland), that this will be the best year of his life. Alex has big plans for the next 12 months and he's determined that everything will go smoothly.

But the universe has other plans and within minutes of arriving at school, he's already embarrassed himself in front of his dream girl, Nicola (Lana Golja), and incurred the wrath of the school bullies, Parker (Xander Speight) and Howe (Liam Erck). And there's more to come...! Flash forward through a year of disasters to find Alex on the eve of his 15th birthday, declaring to his mates that he's sure next year will be a success!

But when Alex wakes up the following morning, he realises something has gone terribly wrong... Instead of turning 15, he's gone back to his 14th birthday and he's about to repeat the same year all over again! Can he learn his lessons and fix the mistakes and disasters from last time around? Or is he doomed to perpetually relive the worst year of his life?

#### Curriculum Links:

English, The Arts (media)

**Relevant sub-strands:** Literature, literacy, forms, viewpoints, analysis of technical and symbolic elements used in media artworks to create representations influenced by story, genre, values and points of view of particular audiences

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Genre, film language, stereotypes, determinism, friendship, social relations, life skills, personal identity, blogs, media arts

To get your students started in developing an ongoing blog, the following student activities provide tasks to be completed and recorded in their blog. Some of the activities require students to be self-directed in undertaking research, while others call for collaborative group work. These student activities explore topics relating to genre, film making techniques and characterisation.

### Activities: Stereotype Collage

#### Summary for Teachers

A good way to help students to record their learning, experiences and thoughts, while also practising their skills in relation to ICTs, is to engage students in creating and developing their own blogs.

Blogs are a great way for students to demonstrate their creative and critical thinking skills. A blog can also be a great assessment piece for you, the teacher. There are many free sites that can support students in creating a blog to record their learning around **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**





## Stereotype Collage

### Student Activities

Ask students to create a **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** online blog. Use this blog to record all responses to the following questions and activities. Students will be required to update the blog episode by episode. When they have finished viewing the **Worst Year Of My Life, Again!** series and the associated students activities, the blog will be submitted and assessed.

### Genre

With your class, discuss genre in film and video and ask them to provide some examples. Ask your students to identify the genre of the **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** TV series and provide any other examples of this particular genre.

Discuss with your students the evolving genre of 'Kid Com'.

'Kid Com' is a variety of sitcom in which the main characters are usually teenagers, with adults in supporting roles such as mentors or authority figures. Perhaps the most common setting for a 'Kid Com' is an academic one with the characters being schoolmates. Ask students to answer the following questions in their blog:

- Define genre and provide examples.
- Are there any genres only relevant to television?
- Define the evolving genre 'Kid Com'.
- What would students expect from a series in this genre? Discuss characters, relationships, settings, actions
- What time slot on, TV would you usually find a show in the Kid Com genre?
- Why do you think the broadcasters have chosen this time slot?



### Film Making Techniques

Different film making techniques are used in different genres to make inferences and to improve audience experience and engagement.

Review students' existing knowledge of camera angles, long shot, medium shot, close-up and discuss the purpose of each angle. Discuss different types of scenes from television and film, e.g. opening shot, romantic scene, scary scene, and then discuss what angle the students might use. Students complete the following activities:

- Watch the title sequence of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**. It begins with a special effect, reverse motion. How does this set the scene/ tone for the series?
- The reverse motion is followed by another visual effect, slow motion. Why do you think that the Director has made this decision?
- Do you get more information about this character from the special effect?
- What camera angle has been chosen? Why is this important?
- What impact does the camera angle have on the audience's relationship with characters and possible plot lines?
- Can you make predictions based on camera angles?
- Identify the different camera shots that were used throughout the title sequence.



## Episode 1

- What information does this sequence give in relation to the plot and characters?

A flash forward is an interjected scene that takes the narrative forward in time. The events presented in a flash forward are bound to happen in the story. It represents expected events, revealing the important parts of the story that are yet to occur.

- In Episode 1, the audience experiences a flash forward for the character, Alex. How does this help you understand Alex in more detail?
- What information about Alex King can you infer from the flash forward?
- Analyse the Director's choice of camera angles/shots. Explain why you think the Director has chosen these camera angles/shots.
- Discuss the impact of these choices on the audience. How do they make the audience feel and what information can the audience gather from the use of these camera angles/shots.

## Protagonist

A protagonist is the main character of the story. The audience is meant to identify with the protagonist and the plot revolves around their story. The **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** protagonist is Alex King.

- The audience is meant to identify with the protagonist, Alex King, and the plot often revolves around their story. The **Worst Year Of My Life, Again!** protagonist is Alex King. Is he a familiar character to you?
- Describe someone you know that reminds you of Alex King?
- Create a character profile for Alex King.

Ask students to brainstorm the types of stereotypes associated with school communities. Category types should include behavioural, attitudinal, gender based and role based groups. Scribe student responses. List characteristics and personality traits associated with each stereotype. If the teacher is not mentioned, explain to students that stereotypes can also be based around different professions and include these in the brainstorm. Ask students to complete the following and record the answers in their blog:

- Identify characters from **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** that match each one of the identified stereotypes.
- Provide evidence from Episodes 1 and 2 for your choices.

In small groups of three to four students, discuss the following:

- Do you think students can be victimised at school because of stereotypes?
- Are stereotypes ever helpful (you are considered smart if you wear glasses)?
- What part does the media play in creating stereotypes?

Each group is to create a collage that will visually demonstrate the effect of stereotyping in today's society. It may be digital, scrapbook, artistic.





## Episode 2

### Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day: the perfect opportunity for Alex (Ned Napier) to impress Nicola (Lana Golja). At least that's the plan. Unfortunately, every attempt to declare his feelings is thwarted, starting when his ridiculously small card ends up in Big Hannah's (Bellamy Duke) hands instead of his dream girl's.

After that mix up, Alex decides to wow Nicola with a big romantic gesture, so he enlists Simon (Laurence Boxhall) and Maddy's (Tiarnie Coupland) help to surprise her in the gym with flowers, music and a declaration of love. But things go terribly wrong and instead of creating a romantic mood, Alex appears in the darkened doorway with broken flowers in the shape of a hatchet, while screeching violin music plays. Nicola takes one look and screams! It's like a horror movie gone wrong!

Next time around - when he realises he's got a second chance - Alex is thrilled and starts off by getting her a better card. But his generosity becomes his undoing when the massive card is too big to fit in Nicola's locker! His attempts to get the card directly to her only result in more mishaps and Alex's huge declaration of love ultimately reaches his arch enemy instead of his dream girl. Will Alex find a way to tell Nicola of his romantic feelings for her?

#### Curriculum Links:

English, Arts (Media), Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing, contributing to healthy and active communities

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Film language, genre, stereotype, plots, camera shots, storyboards, cinematography, film editing, determinism, friendship, social relations, life skills, personal identity, comedy of errors, Imagination

### Activities: Horror Movie

#### Summary for Teachers

Horror stories have been entertaining and terrifying audiences since Ancient times. Greek Mythology enticed audiences with suspense based around demons and gods slaying each other.

The late teen populations are amongst the most frequent movie goers for this specific genre. Episode 2 of **Worst Year Of My Life, Again!** provides an excellent opportunity to analyse the stereotypical elements in a horror flick.

The objective is for the students to engage and explore in the cinematic effects used to create fear and suspense.

Students explain, extend and evaluate their understanding by writing an excerpt from a narrative using a variety of literary techniques to create suspense.





## Horror Movie

### Student Activities

Throughout this episode there is evidence of Maddy's one way crush on Alex. Ask students to answer the following questions on their blog.

- How has the Director been able to portray this character's feelings without any dialogue?
- Take note of the evidence of her crush. What actions, gestures and facial expressions does Maddy use?
- Why are these emotions not obvious to Alex and only the audience?
- Predict how you think this relationship will impact on the storyline?

Nicola is the only girl for Alex and he is completely obsessed by her. This is highlighted by the Director's choice of using the visual and musical effects.

- Discuss the purpose of the slow motion technique?
- Why was harpical music chosen?
- Choose a moment from your own personal experiences when you would want to slow down time. Your first crush, receiving good news, receiving bad news. You want to create second-by-second tension in words. To achieve slowing down of time for your reader you will need to write comprehensive information so that your audience can live every second. Include aspects from all of your senses, what can you see, hear, feel, and taste.

Maddy attempts to warn Alex that Nicola has a bad temper. Alex replies that, "She is edgy, and that is a good thing!"

- Define edgy.
- Discuss if this is something that all girls should strive to be.
- Is it this sort of attitude that defines stereotypes?
- Do you consider this to be a positive stereotype for teenagers to have? Explain your viewpoint.

Every genre has different stereotyped images attached to it. Say for example a HORROR STORY.

- Brainstorm and display what makes a scene scary.
- Discuss with the students the impact of music in a scary scene.
- Are there musical themes associated with fear? (*Psycho* knife, *Jaws* theme)
- Relying on the students existing knowledge on camera angles and camera shots, review the scene of Nicola alone in the gym.
- Students are to identify the scary elements of this scene in Episode 2.
- Encourage students to take as many notes as they can on the elements of light, sound, audio.
- Identify the camera movements that have been included.
- Compile a class list of the scary elements in Episode 2.
- Scribe and display the class list.
- Some responses should include a girl, alone in a dark room, intense music, she hears a noise. She stands and waits for the attacker, silhouette at the door raising arm.
- Why do you think that the Director assumes that young teens will identify with these images?
- How did the scene make you feel? Have you seen scenes similar to this?

Direct students to choose one of the following tasks:

- A written response identifying the effects used by the director to create a stereotypical horror story element.
- Translate the scene into an excerpt from a narrative, for the students to create a suspenseful text. Students will need to consider sentence structure and length. Are the verbs active or passive? Repetitive? What vocabulary could be used to suggest that Nicola is feeling helpless?

The episode concludes with Alex still none the wiser about Maddys' feelings.

- How did the Director use visual symbolism in establishing the secret relationship?
- Is the giraffe symbolic of Maddy's character? How?
- Discuss what animal students would choose to symbolise themselves. Get the students to explore what animal mostly defines their character.



## Episode 3

### Beach

It's fundraising day at the lifesaving club. Alex (Ned Napier) and Simon (Laurence Boxhall) volunteer to man the sausage sizzle, just so they can stay out of the way of their hated teacher and lifesaving coach, Mr Norris (Syd Brisbane). But when their loaded cash tin accidentally gets swapped for a fisherman's bait, they have to race to recover it before Norris realises the money is missing.

They fail dramatically when the money – and the fisherman – ends up in the ocean. But as luck would have it, a radio crew sets up on the beach and announces a cash prize for anyone who can find the mystery object they've hidden nearby. Alex and Simon go in different directions, each convinced they know where it is. But instead of winning the cash, Alex causes a stampede at a kids' party and bursts the club's new inflatable boat.

Could things get any worse for Alex?

When he gets a second chance at the day, Alex convinces Simon they should set up the lifesaving equipment this time, but they manage to get in trouble yet again when the tubs they're organising get swapped for tubs of fish. In his efforts to resolve things, Alex triggers an even worse series of disasters! So much for fixing things this time around...!!



#### Curriculum Links:

English, The Arts (media),  
Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literacy, plan, structure and design media artworks that engage audiences, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Narrative, camera techniques, stereotype, plots, camera shots, storyboards, cinematography, film editing, determinism, friendship, social relations, life skills, personal identity, comedy of errors, Imagination

### Activities: Conflict Graphic Map

#### Summary for Teachers

Conflict is very much a part of everyday life. Every work of literature is based on at least one conflict. Without conflict there is no PLOT! Audiences crave the dilemmas and problem solving associated with the conflict. In many instances the conflict is not stated implicitly, therefore, it is wise for students to be able to identify a range of conflicts. The activities in Episode 3 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** provide an opportunity for students to analyse and identify a range of conflict types. This information is then translated to graphic organisers for a visual representation of conflict and the power it has on the storyline of a narrative.



## Conflict Graphic Map

### Student Activities

Antagonists are the adversary of the protagonists.

- Discuss with the students what this statement means.
- Identify the antagonists in **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**.
- Is there more than one character?
- Discuss similarities and differences between the antagonists.
- Discuss the characters that are the main antagonists.
- What conflicts does Alex encounter?
- What role did the introduction of the fisherman antagonist have on the overall storyline?
- What was the purpose for the introduction of this character?

All stories are built on conflict and suspense. Seldom is a single conflict enough. Audiences expect one conflict after another. The suspense of "what next?" keeps a reader glued to the page, or eyes locked on a screen. A plot is a series of events providing conflict. There are both primary and secondary conflict elements within the plot. Until a story reveals the primary conflict, readers search for the "who, what, and why" of the story. It gives the audience a clear purpose.

Secondary conflicts may transition into another conflict in another chapter or scene.

Some of the more common types of conflict found in literature are

- Character vs. self: also called internal conflict
- Character vs. character: protagonist vs. antagonist
- Character vs. society: main group of characters have an issue with social traditions
- Character vs. nature
- Character vs. supernatural: ghosts, demons, etc
- Character vs. technology
- Character vs. destiny: the main character has a problem with the predetermined path that has been chosen for him.

Alex faces a heightened amount of conflict in his 14th year making it The Worst Year of His Life!.

- The student's task is to identify the primary source of Alex's conflict in Episode 3.
- List the multiple types of conflict present.
- Provide a brief description on each conflict presented in Episode 3.
- Students may design their own note taking table or use the suggested format.



The Now	Conflict type	Brief description
Again		



## Conflict Graphic Map

### Student Activities

- Present this information in a graphic map. There are many available online.
- Students are required to chart the highs and lows of Alex's day.
- Highlight the 'Primary Conflict'.
- Include related images and descriptions on the graphic map
- Compare and contrast "The Now" and "The Again"
- Write a report based on your findings.
- Do the conflicts remain relatively the same?
- Are the conflicts in a different chronological order in each part of Episode 3? Provide examples to justify your answer.
- Examine several examples to highlight how emotions, dispositions and decision making can affect outcomes.
- Explore different viewpoints, practising being empathetic and considering alternative ways to respond.



A crowd evacuation is created in both parts of Alex's day.

- Examine how the movement of the camera is used.
- What techniques could you identify?
- What impact did this movement have on the audience?
- What emotion is the Director trying to convey?

Simon comments that Alex has superpowers?

- Do you think knowing the future is classified as a superpower? Justify your point of view.
- Usually superheroes possess superpowers. Does Alex possess any other traits of a superhero?



## Episode 4

### April Fool

It's April Fool's Day. Simon (Laurence Boxhall) fancies himself a champion prankster and makes Alex (Ned Napier) his first victim by convincing him it's crazy hair and casual clothes day. He continues to push the gag further when he tricks Alex into changing back to his uniform in a darkened classroom that turns out to be an all-girls Human Development class. When Alex emerges into the crowded hallway, half-naked and humiliated in front of the girls, Simon gets all the glory from their schoolmates and dubs himself 'King of Pranks'.

Alex tries to get his revenge by pranking Simon back but every trick he pulls backfires. His worst day is capped off when he gets tricked by Loren (Kaiting Yip) and Amy (Jessie Blott), who fool him into thinking that Nicola (Lana Golja) wants to meet him after school.

Next time around, Alex decides he'll be the champion prankster and Simon will be his victim. Drawing inspiration from Simon's gags, he is briefly the most popular kid at school as he succeeds in humiliating not just students but teachers as well.

Simon decides he's had enough, and finds a surprising ally in Maddy (Tiarnie Coupland), who doesn't like what Alex has become. Together they hatch a plan to cut Alex down to size. Will Alex figure out the trick before it's too late...?

### Activities: Sociogram

#### Summary for Teachers

Characterisation is a crucial element in the study of literature. In fictional literature, authors use many different types of characters to tell their stories. Different types of characters fulfil different roles in the narrative process. The audience is able to relate and empathise with characters as their story is being told, understanding that character relationships change and evolve. To improve critical reading abilities, an important lesson to learn is that stories are less about what happens and more about who they happen to.

#### Curriculum Links:

English; Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Literature, literacy, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, intercultural understanding, numeracy

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Narrative, plots, storyboards, determinism, friendship, social relations, life skills, personal identity, comedy of errors, Imagination

In Episode 4 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** the students will review an array of character types to identify different traits. Using this information they construct a sociogram to highlight the relationships, both positive and negative that are present in the episode.





## Sociogram

### Student Activities

There are many characters developing in each episode of **Worst Year Of My Life, Again!**. Each one of them fulfilling different roles in the narrative process.

- With some analysis, you can detect some or all of the types.
- Present the students with the definitions and read through them to ensure understanding.

Remember that each character may embody more than one of these character types at the same time

- Major or central characters are vital to the development and resolution of the conflict.
- Minor characters serve to complement the major characters and help move the plot events forward.
- Dynamic - A dynamic character is a person who changes over time. Most dynamic characters tend to be central rather than peripheral characters, because resolving the conflict is the major role of central characters.
- Static - A static character is someone who does not change over time; his or her personality does not transform or evolve.
- Round - A rounded character is anyone who has a complex personality; he or she is often portrayed as a conflicted and contradictory person.
- Flat - A flat character is the opposite of a round character. This literary personality is notable for one kind of personality trait or characteristic.
- Stock - Stock characters are those types of characters who have become conventional or stereotypical through repeated use in particular types of stories.
- Protagonist - The protagonist is the central person in a story, and is often referred to as the story's main character.
- Antagonist - The antagonist is the character(s) (or situation) that represents the opposition against which the protagonist must contend.
- Anti-Hero - A major character, usually the protagonist, who lacks conventional nobility of mind, and who struggles for values not deemed universally admirable.
- Foil - A foil is any character (usually the antagonist or an important supporting character) whose personal qualities contrast with another character (usually the protagonist). By providing this contrast, we get to know more about the other character.
- Symbolic - A symbolic character is any major or minor character whose very existence represents some major idea or aspect of society.



Use this information to construct a sociogram.

- This will need to highlight both positive and negative relationships and demonstrate any changes in character.
- Investigate the benefits of these relationships and examine the impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing
- Analysing how roles and responsibilities change and evaluate the strategies used for managing these increasing responsibilities

This task will be a progressive task and is ongoing throughout subsequent episodes.



## Sam's Party

When Alex (Ned Napier) and his sister, Sam (Arielle O'Neill), are left home alone for the night, there's clearly only one thing to do – have a house party! But if Alex thought he was going to have fun, he thought wrong. Sam blackmails him into clean-up duty with the threat of showing an embarrassing video of him if he doesn't do as she says.

Simon (Laurence Boxhall) instantly causes problems when he spills some juice on the rug and then Alex accidentally drinks ginger beer – which always makes him throw up! When Alex gets stuck inside the pantry, it seems the calamities will never end and then a cheese toastie catches fire, the power short-circuits, and Alex's hopes of surviving the party without unleashing his sister's wrath, are dashed. Sam is livid with Alex, despite the fact that she managed to snog her hot new crush, Justin, at the end of the party.

The next time around, Alex is desperate to avoid disaster and suggests to Sam that she holds the house party outside. Alex tells Maddy (Tiarnie Coupland) the plan for the night is to keep Sam and Justin apart. After the party last time, Justin (Josh Geary) ended up dumping Sam, leaving her heartbroken and Alex holding the tissues!

But moving outside does nothing to stop the flood of failures and Alex once again finds himself on the point of being humiliated by his sister's embarrassing video. Will she send it for everyone to snigger at? Or will an unexpected arrival save Alex's day?

## Activities: Mapping Seagate

### Summary for Teachers

The focus of Episode 5 is to explore the following concept: does the media influence the reality for teenagers?

Media coverage shapes how Australians perceive the world and what they consider to be important. The media reports the news, serves as a conduit

### Curriculum Links:

English, Humanities and Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing, contributing to healthy and active communities, collecting, recording, evaluating and representing, interpreting, analysing and concluding

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, intercultural understanding, numeracy

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Maps, narrative, plots, storyboards, determinism, friendship, social relations, life skills, personal identity, comedy of errors, imagination

between the government and the people, helps determine which issues should be discussed, and keeps people actively involved in society and politics and popular culture

The media plays a role in providing us with news, education and entertainment. The vast majority of people trust the media to provide them with accurate and truthful information. We trust media and we mostly trust what we view to be true.

Episode 5 of **Worst Day of My Life, Again!** provides a platform for students to critically analyse a television family and relate them to their own personal experiences.

Popular girl stereotypes are examined evoking discussion if they are healthy role models for teenage girls.

There is also an opportunity to discuss the very prevalent issue of cyber bullying. There are many online resources available that inform, prepare teens and list where to access help if required that you may wish to use to support this lesson. Cybersmart is a national cybersafety education program aimed at promoting online safety for children and young people, more information can be found online.



## Mapping Seagate

### Student Activities

Pose the following question to the class.

- How does the media construct reality?

The students are to consider sets, characters and relationships

- Scribe and display all student responses

### Alex King's Family

- Do you know anyone who is like one of the characters in this TV family?
- What is the relationship like between members of this family? Do they get along? Do they support each other?
- Include evidence from Episode 5 to support your statements
- Do you think the actors that play the roles of the family in this TV series act this way in real life? Justify your answer.
- Why do you think the Director chose these actors for the roles?
- Does this family live like your family? (i.e. their house, their neighbourhood, their clothes)
- How would you categorise this family? Real or not real? Have a class vote and record answers. Represent the answers as a column graph.
- Present the problem do you think it is OK to present families that may not be real to viewers?
- What do you think the problems associated with this would be?

### Alex King's Community

- Discuss with the students how they would describe Alex King's community?
- What type of people might he have as his neighbours? Explain your choices.
- Discuss with the students what elements of the township they can identify with.
- Do the students feel that they have visited the town before?
- What is familiar to them?
- Examine values and beliefs about cultural and social issues such as gender, race, violence, sexuality and disability that are prevalent in this community.

Start to consider what type of geographical location Alex resides in.

- List the places that the viewer has so far visited in the fictional town of Seagate. Alex's house, Simon lives nearby as he can pick him up, school, mall, surf life saving club, jetty.
- Use this information to design and draw a map of Seagate.
- Add locations as you watch subsequent episodes of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**

### Samantha vs Nicola

Direct students to compare and contrast the characters of Alex's sister Samantha and the girl of his dreams, Nicola. Is there evidence that these characters are similar?

Guide a class discussion on the following points: both are good looking, popular and have many admirers. Ask students:

- Do you personally know someone like Nicola and Samantha?
- Do you think they are positive role models for teenage girls?
- Consider if they are unrealistic role models for some teenage girls and the consequences of this.

Consider Samantha's and Alex's relationship.

- Is this type of sibling relationship real?
- Do you know someone who has a similar relationship to this?

### Cyber bullying

Define cyber bullying with the class. There are many sites and resources online.

- What do you think of the recording of Alex in the bath that was sent to all of Sam's friends via her phone?
- Is it really a funny situation? Justify your response.
- Is this a form of online bullying?
- Do you know anyone that has had to endure this type of public humiliation?
- Why did the Director assume that teens would find this scene humorous?

The students are to write a written response addressing if the media should depict/promote online bullying in a comical way. This is to be completed in paragraph format with a strong topic sentence.



### Maths Test

When he sleeps through his alarm, Alex (Ned Napier) misses the bus and arrives late to Mr Norris' (Syd Brisbane) maths class. His punishment? A surprise test for everyone, which officially makes him the most unpopular person in class. His solution? Stop Parker (Xander Speight) and Howe (Liam Erck) from beating him up by stealing the answers! When he's almost caught red-handed with the answer sheet, he finds an escape route through the air-conditioning vent. Only, unbeknownst to him, his sneaky move is quickly apparent to Norris when Alex shows up in the test with his face covered in vent grime.

The next time around, Alex makes sure he doesn't miss the bus – surely this means there'll be no maths test? But Simon (Laurence Boxhall) has planned ahead and stolen an answer sheet for the test. Convinced this will backfire, Alex decides to return the answer sheet. He gets sprung by Norris, whose punishment is... to throw a surprise maths test for the whole class. Alex is back in the bad books and desperately gives Simon's stash of answer sheets to Parker and Howe. After the test, they realise Simon had the wrong answer sheets and Alex must once again crawl through the vents to try and fix things. Will he succeed or will Norris just turn up the heat?

### Activities: Storyboard 'Again' Time

#### Summary for Teachers

The focus of activities in Episode 6 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** is to build on the students existing knowledge and understanding of the editing process.

There are opportunities for the students to become familiar with shot sequences and the use of transitions. Students will develop an understanding of the function of editing and how the Director uses this to enhance the story.

#### Curriculum Links:

English; The Arts (media)

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, plan, structure and design media artworks that engage audiences, develop media representations to show familiar or shared social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication technology (ICT) capability

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Cinematography, film editing, camera shots, narrative, plots, storyboards, imagination



A storyboard will be constructed to visually represent a segment of the episode frame by frame. The students will be encouraged to use storyboard language.

There are many storyboard resources available online. Alternately, pen and pencil create the same visual effect.

The storyboards can be used as a classroom display when placed in chronological order, allowing the students to experience how the Director and his crew initially saw the story.



## Storyboard 'Again' Time

### Student Activities

Begin this lesson by asking students what do you have to read/interpret when you are watching **Worst Year Of My Life, Again!?**

Discuss with the students the role that the Director plays in establishing how the viewer reads a television episode.

Review techniques that the students have identified in previous episodes.

Explain the task before the students and watch Episode 6 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**.

The students will be required to review the basic elements of a storyboard and become familiar with storyboard language.

Use the following table to direct the students to research the language of storyboards or alternatively, use the following information to take notes.

Storyboards should convey:

- The story and associated movements.
- What the characters are saying to each other.
- How much time has passed from the last frame of the storyboard and the current one
- Where the camera is positioned in relation to the scene - close or far away; is the camera moving?

### Storyboard Language

CLOSE-UP SHOT	A close range of distance between the camera and the subject.
DISSOLVE	A transition between two shots, where one shot fades away and another shot fades in.
FADE	A transition from a shot to black where the image gradually becomes darker is a Fade Out; or from black where the image gradually becomes brighter is a Fade In.
HIGH CAMERA ANGLE	A camera angle which looks down on its subject making it look small, weak or unimportant.
JUMP CUT	A rapid, jerky transition from one frame to the next, either disrupting the flow of time or movement within a scene or making an abrupt transition from one scene to another.
LEVEL CAMERA ANGLE	A camera angle which is even with the subject; it may be used as a neutral shot.
LONG SHOT	A long range of distance between the camera and the subject, often providing a broader range of the setting.
LOW CAMERA ANGLE	A camera angle which looks up at its subject; it makes the subject seem important and powerful.
PAN	A steady, sweeping movement from one point in a scene to another.
POV (point of view shot):	A shot which is understood to be seen from the point of view of a character within the scene.
REACTION SHOT	A shot of someone looking off screen. A reaction shot can also be a shot of someone in a conversation where they are not given a line of dialogue but are just listening to the other person speak.
TILT	Using a camera on a tripod, the camera moves up or down to follow the action.
ZOOM	Use of the camera lens to move closely towards the subject.



## Episode 6

### Storyboard 'Again' Time

#### Student Activities

Watch the first half of Episode 6 and ask the class to identify the different types of elements that would be included on a storyboard:

- Pause and highlight a variety of techniques.
- Discuss how camera angles highlight relationships and mood of characters.
- Get examples from students on how the movement from the screen could be portrayed on a storyboard.

Students will be required to work in groups of 2-4. Each group will be responsible for the design and completion of the main storyboard elements for one section of the second half part of Episode 6.

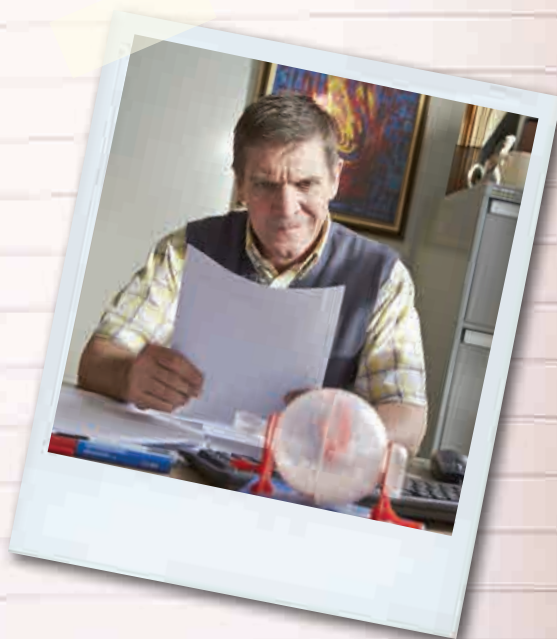
A suggested breakdown of the episode (below).

- Watch the second half of Episode 6 to let each group become familiar with their scene.
- On the second viewing of the second half of Episode 6 ask the students to take individual notes about all the different elements of a storyboard that they could identify.

- Provide students the opportunity to collaborate with group. The students may need to review the second half of Episode 6 several times in order to elicit finer details.

Direct the students to collaboratively prepare and present their storyboard.

Most commonly, storyboards are drawn in pen or pencil. However, photos, cut out pictures from magazines, can also be used. Keep in mind that the drawings don't have to be elaborate.



	Time start (approx.)	Time completion (approx.)
From home to school		13.06
Corridor to class	13.07	13.44
In classroom	13.45	15.31
Corridor to sick bay	15.32	15.57
Sick bay to library	15.57	16.37
Library	16.37	17.22
Stairwell and corridor	17.22	18.34
Classroom to outside entrance	18.34	19.46
Corridor/air vent	19.46	21.07
Storeroom, corridor, ceiling	21.07	21.40
Ceiling, on the floor, in the office	21.40	23.34
Office till end of episode	23.35	



## Match Day

It's the morning of the soccer grand final and to his horror, Alex (Ned Napier) discovers Sam (Arielle O'Neill) has deliberately washed his soccer top with her red socks. There's no way Alex can captain the team in a top dyed pink! Alex, Simon (Laurence Boxhall) and Maddy (Tiarnie Coupland) get a lift to the sports shop from Alex's Dad (Jeremy Stanford), who regales them with the story of the cheating incident that inspired him to get his referee accreditation and coaching certificate. The kids take advantage of a traffic jam to escape Dad's rant and run to the sports shop. Alex causes havoc when he tussles with a track-suited man over the last soccer top, which results in the man being held by store security.

When Alex discovers the man was meant to referee the match and that his team will have to forfeit, he reluctantly agrees to Simon's suggestion to get his Dad to referee. Looks like that accreditation has come in handy after all. But after Dad red-cards him, Alex has to sit on the sidelines and watch every excruciating moment of his team's disastrous loss.

In his loop year, Alex goes into the match with a key advantage – he can remember every move from the game and will use this knowledge to help his team win. But just as the team is on the brink of victory, Dad jumps into the game again!



### Curriculum Links:

English, Arts (Media); Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, plan, structure and design media artworks that engage audiences, develop and refine media production skills to shape the technical and symbolic elements of images, sounds and text for a specific purpose and meaning

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Cinematography, film editing, camera shots, narrative, plots, storyboards, imagination, friendship, social relations, life skills, personal identity, media arts, wellbeing, resilience, coping skills, help seeking behaviour

## Activities: The Art of Foley Dialogue

### Summary for Teachers

'Comedy' is a genre of film in which the main emphasis is on humour. It is one of the oldest genres in film; some of the very first silent movies were comedies. Comedy, unlike other film genres, puts much more focus on individual stars.

Episode 7 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** demonstrates the choreographing of physical comedy. Students will analyse the sequences in the episode allowing them to value physical comedy is an art form and understand that directing and shooting comedy scenes require a very special set of skills.

The students will also research the 'Art of Foley', the art of producing everyday sounds in film.

Students will gain an understanding of how sound effects are used to enhance the auditory experience of the audience and this understanding will be presented in a performed dialogue.



## The Art of Foley Dialogue

### Student Activities

Introduce the lesson by asking students about what they remember about Alex's bedroom. Recount as many aspects as possible.

- What information have the set designers tried to convey about this protagonist?
- What are the colours?
- Are there clues about his interests?
- Is there any one part of the set design that stands out and why?
- What have you noticed about the Doona Cover?
- Do you think that it is a deliberate choice for it to keep changing?
- Why might the Director have done this?

Describe the relationship that Alex has with his father.

- Consider if this appears to be a normal teenage son and father relationship?
- Analyse how their relationship influences their behaviours and actions.
- Examine how individuals, family and peer groups have influenced Alex's behaviours, decisions and actions.
- What elements of their relationship can you identify with?
- How would you describe the acting of Jeremy Stanford portraying Alex's dad?
- Do you think it was realistic acting or over-acting?
- Why do you think that he would have been directed to do this?

Alex convinces Nicola and her posse to attend the soccer match by highlighting the fact that everyone will be there.

- How does Nicola react to this?
- Is this something that you would have predicted from her character?
- How do Lauren and Amy, Nicola's entourage, react to her decision?
- Do you think that this is portraying positive self-esteem?

- Ask the students to identify when peer pressure affected their own lives.
- Was it a positive or negative experience?
- What strategies can teens employ to empower them to make their own decision?
- Identify and discuss an example of where one of the characters asserted their stance on a situation, dilemma or decision by expressing their thoughts, opinions and beliefs.

One of the oldest comedic traditions is physical comedy. It is one of the hardest genres to direct and capture well. Timing has to be tight and action has to be realistic, or the point is lost and the laughs don't come to pass.

Analyse the scene in the clothing shop starting from approximately 5.29 min through to 7.29 min.

- List all of the comedic moments that the Director has set up through complex staging.

Record what you think might have been written in this scene to help the actors and director grasp the 'look' of the scene. If possible, don't just write "he falls", but write, "he steps in a bucket which sticks to his left foot, causing him to ski across the shop's wet floor."

Watch the excerpt from when Alex and Parker are facing each other prior to kick off, approximately 9.20 min – 9.40 min.

- How has the Director used sound to heighten the comedic experience?
- Are these really sounds that you would hear?
- Do you think that these sounds were effective?
- Why did the Director feel that his audience would identify with these sounds?
- Discuss why sound is crucial to the audiences experience.

Direct the students to independently research the 'Art of Foley' and in particular how sound effects can be generated in film.

- The task is to prepare a dialogue summarising the second half of Episode 7 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** using some of the sounds they have researched.
- The students need to use a combination of software and physical sound.
- You may wish for the students to produce a written statement on the sounds they choose, why they choose them and how they were made.



## Cross Country

Alex (Ned Napier) couldn't possibly be less excited about running in the boys' cross country race. Until he learns that Nicola (Lana Golja) won the girls' cross country race, and that the winner of the boys' race will be forever linked with her in the school trophy cabinet. Suddenly, he knows what he has to do: win, win, win! Never mind that he hasn't trained, and that super-fit Troy (Kingsley O'Connor) is clearly the stronger contender – Alex is determined to be the first across the finish line. Even if he has to cheat!

Against Maddy's (Tiarnie Coupland) protests, he agrees to Simon's (Laurence Boxhall) plan to catch a bus to the first checkpoint, but this 'shortcut' takes them on a convoluted journey involving a near miss with his mum and sister, missed stops and a ticket inspector... until any chance Alex had of winning is dashed.

The next time around, he's ready for action. He's trained, he knows the route, and he knows that cheating won't help. And while he gets off to a great start, his determination to stick to the course in order to win, quickly leads to more misfortune! Can he still claim victory and get his name paired with Nicola's for eternity

## Activities: Musical Graph

### Summary for Teachers

Music is a powerful tool in filmmaking and choosing the right music is an art in itself. Film directors work hand in hand with composers to produce the exact sound that will accompany an image so that it enhances the emotional quality of the film for the audience.

In these activities students critically examine the role of music in Episode 8 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**. They will collect data on the amount of music present in the episode. The students then present this information in a graphical presentation.

### Curriculum Links:

The Arts, English

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literacy, media arts

**General Capabilities:** Numeracy, literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication technology (ICT) capability

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Music, musical forms, analysing, film language, camera techniques, sound, statistics and probability, cinematography, camera shots, narrative, plots, storyboards, imagination

The students are required to analyse their information and present their finding in a written report. The report will highlight the array of music, when it was used and the emotion it evoked.



## Musical Graph

### Student Activities



### Background Music

Discuss the role of music in film.

- What is the music's purpose?
- Is music necessary?
- What is the impact of the music?
- How does music impact on the emotion you feel?.

Should music always be noticeable?

- Direct discussion to background music provides tone and emotion.
- It may foreshadow a change in mood and add to the viewer comprehension by linking scenes.

- How much music have the students noticed in previous episodes of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!?**
- Estimate how much music is actually delivered in each episode of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**

Critically analyse the music that has been chosen for Episode 8.

- Students watch Episode 8 taking notes to critically analyse both quantity and the effects of music as a mood enhancer.
- They will need to consider the setting, type of music, actions and suggested emotional responses.
- A suggested template is shown below.

You may wish to discuss 'leitmotif' with your students at this stage.

A 'leitmotif' is a short, constantly recurring musical phrase, often associated with a particular character, place, or idea.

- Discuss with the students Nicola's 'leitmotif'.
- Consider why the Director chose this to be constant throughout the series of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**.
- On the completion of viewing Episode 8 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**, calculate the total time where music is used to enhance the scene.
- What percentage of total air time is this equivalent to?
- Was it more or less time than you expected?
- Are you surprised with this analysis?
- Direct students to categorise the music, e.g. action, chase, foreshadowing.
- Direct students to record and display the data they have collected.
- Compare, interpret and assess the effectiveness of data displays.

Time length min	Set	Action	Music	Emotions
1.08 -1.16	Alex's bedroom	Waking up	Whistling	Calm, ready to start new day



## Musical Graph

### Student Activities

The students now have to decide on a graphical representation for this data. There are many online resources for this activity.

- Direct the class to gather the mean, median and mode from their data.
- Write a written report critically analysing your graphical interpretation.

Discuss with the students information that would be relevant for individual reports, e.g.

- What type of music was used the most, least?
- Could this breakdown be typical of each episode in the series?
- Did you recognise the same music sequences from previous episodes?
- Why might a director choose to do this?



### The Camera Action Tilt

Describe how the Director has introduced the character Troy into the series.

- Did Troy look larger and wider than Alex?
- Why do you think the Director chose this camera angle?
- Do you think Troy will feature in future episodes?

Maddy is Alex's motivational coach in the "Again" segment.

- Identify the techniques the Director used to infer bonding between the characters.
- Predict if you think that this will be a turning point in Alex and Maddy's relationship.

In this episode Parker pours juice into Alex's bag and then in the temporal loop Nicola pours the juice in the bag.

- Compare and contrast these two characters to consider and discuss the similarities and differences between these characters.

Discuss the subtle plot differences in Episode 8.

- Guide discussion around the reversal: cheated the first time, did it right in the "Again".
- Discuss which was a better day, the "Now" or the "Again"?
- Can you suggest a moral message that is linked to this?
- Do you think that this will be an ongoing trend in the next lot of episodes?



## Episode 9

### School Play

Alex (Ned Napier) is thrilled when he gets the chance to play Romeo opposite Nicola's (Lana Golja) Juliet in the school play – finally, he can land a kiss on his dream girl. But at the height of his celebrations, he slams into a skateboarding Parker (Xander Speight) in the school corridor and injures his nose. Then, to make matters worse, he wipes snot on Nicola. On stage he fares no better, as his injury causes him to tumble at Nicola's feet, then sneeze all over her. Unable to overcome this new insult, Nicola abandons the play and runs home. Alex chases after her and convinces her to return, but just as she's softening towards him, he stuffs everything up by letting her dog loose onto a busy street...

On his second chance, Alex carefully tries to avoid the skateboard accident he suffered before, but manages to get a door slammed in his face instead. Despite an even worse injury than last time, Alex refuses to give up on his chance to kiss Nicola. But despite his best intentions, nausea overwhelms him and he's sick at her feet. Once again, Nicola flees in disgust; once again, Alex sets off to bring her back. But can he manage to save the dog and win the girl this time?

### Activities: Stunt Analysis

#### Summary for Teachers

In Episode 9 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** there is a bike chase scene reminiscent of *BMX Bandits*. Students will analyse and reflect as to the editing choices made by the director to create the suspense of the chase scene. This episode also creates opportunities for the students to explore ethical issues on Alex's knowledge of the universe. They are encouraged to be involved in classroom discussions reflecting the moral choices that are associated with the main characters.

#### Curriculum Links:

English, The Arts (media), Humanities and Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, viewpoints, analyse how technical and symbolic elements are used in media artworks to create representations influenced by story, genre, values and points of view of particular audiences, perspectives and interpretations, being healthy, safe and active

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing, text knowledge, word knowledge, critical and creative thinking, inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas, generating ideas, possibilities and actions, personal and social capability, self-management, social management, ethical understanding, understanding ethical concepts and issues, exploring values, rights and responsibilities, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, investigating with ICT, managing and operating ICT

**Activity Themes/Topics:** film techniques, action, culture and traditions, humour





## Stunt Analysis

### Student Activities

- There is a dramatic change in the opening scene in the bedroom. Discuss.
- Why do you think the Director has chosen to deviate from the traditional start to the episode of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**?

In this episode the drama teacher is introduced. Consider if the drama teacher is representative of a certain type of stereotype.

- Review the lighting in the drama rehearsal room, how would you describe it?
- What mood do you think the Director was trying to create?
- Describe the action that is taking place in the scene?

Comment on the costumes used in the play.

- Which actors are and aren't in costume?
- Why do you think not all characters are in costume?
- Have you experienced a theatre rehearsal at school?
- Is this typical of your experience?

Discuss why the Director has the character of Alex doing stunts on his BMX while chasing after Nicola?

- What was your reaction to the stunts?

### Multiple cameras

Multiple cameras can greatly increase the impact of an action sequence without increasing the complexity of the actions or stunts themselves. A wide range of angles, close-ups, perspectives on the action, and changing balance between camera motion and subject motion allows the director more choices to tell the story.

- Was there evidence in the chase scenes that more than one camera has been used to film a shot?
- What was the overall effect of multiple cameras?
- Consider if multiple cameras are a more proficient way to tell a story.
- What computer effects were evident in the chase scene?
- What was the purpose of these special effects?
- Were sound effects used to heighten the audience's experience?
- Do you think the Director was trying to create a humorous or a realistic scene? Your answer will need to include evidence from Episode 9.

A suggested extension for this activity is for students to film (e.g. skateboard, jumping down stairs) with one camera using a range of angles. Students then combine and edit the scenes together using an online editing tool.



## Halloween

Whenever Nicola (Lana Golja) throws a party, she puts up photos on her blog: a one-way ticket to instant cooldom and, in Alex's (Ned Napier) opinion, his best bet at getting her attention. For her upcoming Halloween party, he goes all out and makes an impressive Grim Reaper costume. Now he just has to get to the party of the year! When his costume gets caught in the front door, Alex has to strip down and climb back into the house to release it, suffering the indignity of being spotted in his undies by Amy and Loren.

But the embarrassment doesn't stop there. As he and his friends continue to Nicola's party they're stopped by a crowd of little kids in mummy costumes, who turn into a surprisingly scary force and chase Alex through a park into a tree branch. Maddy (Tiarnie Coupland) and Simon (Laurence Boxhall) take Alex to hospital, where he ends up wandering the halls of a geriatric ward and scaring the patients with his too convincing version of 'Death'!

The second time around, Alex and his friends do make it to the party, but that doesn't mean things will go smoothly. After being locked out of Nicola's, they sneak back in, only to be chased around the house by Parker (Xander Speight). Alex ends up on a rooftop with a swiftly unravelling costume. When all hell breaks loose, Alex may be successful in his bid to get his photo on Nicola's blog after all. Just not in the way he expected...!!

## Activities: Urban Legend of the Black Cat

### Summary for Teachers

Urban legends extend from the age old traditions of folklore, where the stories were passed from generation to generation via word of mouth. Legends change over time as each storyteller injects their own detail.

### Curriculum Links:

English, Health and Physical Education, The Arts (media), Humanities and Social Sciences

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, media arts, skills, techniques and processes, plan, produce and present media artworks for specific audiences and purposes using responsible media practice, perspectives and interpretations, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing, contributing to healthy and active communities

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding, information and communication technology (ICT) capability

**Activity Themes/Topics:** cyber-bullying, ethical behavior, peer pressure, personal and social capability, personal identity, genre, lighting, sound, friendship, social relations, life skills, media arts, wellbeing, resilience, coping skills, help-seeking behaviour

Urban legends can often be ridiculous, outrageous, and frightening. Some may have an element of truth and others are a complete fabrication of the truth.

Often, you will have heard the story from a friend, or a friend of a friend, but they will not have experienced the event themselves.

In Episode 10 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** students explore the Urban Legends that they are familiar with. There are many examples online that you may wish to direct the students to read and comprehend.

Episode 10 can also act as a stimulus to discuss with the students inappropriate images on the internet. Through a directed discussion the students will relate the story to their own personal experiences and actions and problem solve effective strategies to combat cyber-bullying.



## Urban Legend of the Black Cat

### Student Activities

Alex, Simon and Maddy discuss urban legends in Episode 10 of **Worst Day of My Life, Again!**.

- Ask students to define what these are.

Urban legends are narratives based on people's fear of the unknown. This type of story is transferred mouth to mouth, email to email, etc. and falls into the horror story genre.

Ask the students to consider the following

- Do you know of any urban legends? Compile a class list of urban legends.
- Discuss common elements of the legends.
- Do people believe in urban legends?
- Why are they in society?

Consider why urban legends feature in the Halloween episode of **Worst year of My Life, Again!**.

Together as a class read an urban legend.

- Lead a discussion of the language found in the narrative (short sentences, a point of climax, emotive language and the structure of an urban legend).

The students are to create their own urban legend incorporating the black cat featured in Episode 10.

Encourage the students to experiment with their punctuation to maximise effect. Each student is to present their report orally. Encourage expressive reading for maximum impact.

A possible extension to this activity would be for the children to film their story, including the 'Art of Foley' researched in previous lessons.

There are many online programs that can support students to create the creepy background music.

### Music

- Describe the music where Alex is walking down the corridor in the hospital.
- Is it similar to another TV series that you may have watched?
- How is the scary scene in this episode similar to the fright scene in Episode 2?
- Which scene do you consider to be more effective?
- Why?

Part one of Episode 10 concludes with a mug shot of Alex.

- Explain the stereotypes that have been used with this shot.
- Do you consider a shot such as this to be realistic?
- What purpose do you think the Director has chosen for this mug shot?
- Describe the camera angle and the effect of the clouds behind Nicola's house for her party?
- Did it help to create Halloween tension?

The music choice to set the scene for Nicola's party is a 1970's classic by Sky Hooks "Horror Movie".



## Concert Tickets

Alex (Ned Napier) realises he has a chance to win Nicola (Lana Golja) over with concert tickets for her favourite band, Boyz-Az-1. He just has to dig them out of his kitchen bin where Sam (Arielle O'Neill) threw them out that morning. But when he gets held back in detention by Norris, he knows it'll be a race against time to recover the tickets before the bins are collected.

Sure enough, by the time he gets home, he sees the garbage truck driving away from his house. He chases it to the tip where he's forced to dig through a pile of filthy rubbish bags to find the tickets... When he shows up at the concert hall hours later, completely dishevelled and minus the tickets, Nicola is furious and Alex knows he's lost any chance he had of impressing her.

But lucky for him, he gets the chance to try again when his loop year comes around. This time, he grabs the tickets before Sam throws them out but then she reclaims them to sell online. Thwarted again, Alex remembers the ticket scalper he saw last time and raids his piggy-bank to pay the \$200, only to discover he's been ripped off and has ended up with tickets for an old concert. But just when Alex decides he's ruined any chance he had with Nicola, she does something unexpected. Could he still be in with a shot...?

## Activities: Alex loves Nicola's Comic

### Summary for Teachers

Alex lives in hope every day that the love of his life Nicola will notice him, and when he thinks that she finally has he is filled with pure joy. In this episode the students will analyse Alex's body language and use this information to portray his thoughts in a comic strip. The focus again on writing for humour.

### Curriculum Links:

English, Health and Physical Education, The Arts (media)

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, media arts, viewpoints, plan, produce and present media artworks for specific audiences and purposes using responsible media practice, develop media representations to show familiar or shared social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing, contributing to healthy and active communities

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication technology (ICT) capability

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Analysing, camera techniques, interpersonal and personal learning, relationships, rights of individuals, values, social relations, life skills, media arts, wellbeing, resilience, coping skills, help-seeking behaviour

Students are also encouraged to explore the more serious side to Episode 11 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**. Through guided discussions the students will define their own morality. They will be required to define right from wrong and question their own motives for their answers.





## Alex loves Nicola's Comic

### Student Activities

View the opening scene of Alex walking to school.

- Scribe Alex's thoughts, before and after he sees Nicola on the steps.
- Use these ideas to create a one page comic strip.

A suggested procedure to publish a comic:

- Decide the format: How many panels is your comic going to be?

This can be done online or on paper.

- Plan each panel. You need to know what is happening where, which characters will be included, etc. Keep it simple. A written script should be as bare-bones as possible. Descriptions of scenery should only be included if they are necessary to the action of the strip
- Balance text and images. Try to limit the number of speech balloons to two (use three balloons if one balloon only has one or two words within it), and keep the number of words in a panel preferably below 20

Encourage the students to establish the characters in a frame first and then add speech bubbles.

Sketch in the background and then do the major line work

### Focus In, Focus Out

A punctuation device used in film whereby the image gradually comes into focus or goes out of focus.

- Explain to students how this device is used in Norris' office scene. (The clock in the background goes from being out of focus to in focus and then out of focus again.)
- Discuss the director's purpose using this technique.



"You mean you never threw them out last time?" is how Alex reacts to the discovery of the tickets never being in the rubbish. This is the first time that he has indicated to any member of his family that he is experiencing a temporal loop.

- Discuss should Alex have told his family that he is in a temporal loop experience?
- Try and imagine yourself if one of your siblings was in a time loop and didn't tell you. They had knowledge of everyday of your life in a year.
- How would the students react knowing that one of their family members could change their future without them knowing?
- Alex prevented his sister from developing a relationship with Justin because he knew how the relationship ended.
- Discuss your thoughts and feelings about this dilemma.

## Christmas

Alex's Mum (Annie Jones) LOVES Christmas, but Alex (Ned Napier) has better things to do – namely, attending Nicola's (Lana Golja) beach barbeque party. If he can just speed up his family's celebrations, he might be able to do both! He encourages a rapid unwrapping of presents, then 'treats' the family to an early Christmas lunch at... the dodgy sandwich shack opposite Nicola's beach party. In his eagerness to manage the day, he creates more chaos than cheer, and finds himself being chased around the kitchen by the waiter, electrocuting a fish, and upending his Mum's delicious pavlova all over himself – at the very moment that Nicola walks into the shack. But even worse, when his Mum realises he's ditched her special Christmas lunch to be closer to Nicola, she can't hide her tears and Alex is overwhelmed by shame.

Determined not to make the same mistake again, he embraces his do-over Christmas and tries to give his Mum the joyous, family-filled day she so desperately wanted, even if he has to overcome live turkeys, choking aunts and humiliating underwear to do it! Will his Mum miss out on the pleasure of her favourite day again or can Alex find a way to dig himself out of disaster to make her happy?

### Curriculum Links:

English, Health and Physical Education, The Arts (media), Humanities and Social Sciences

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, viewpoints, skills, techniques and processes, plan, produce and present media artworks for specific audiences and purposes using responsible media practice, perspectives and interpretations, citizenship, diversity and identity, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing

**General Capabilities:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication technology (ICT) capability

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication, technology (ICT) capability, intercultural understanding

## Activities: Celebrations

### Summary for Teachers

It's Christmas; Alex's mum's favourite day of the year. The King's family Christmas is one, long day of tradition! The students will explore their own and their peers Christmas traditions. There are opportunities within these lessons for students to independently research a range of cultural traditions around this festivity.

In this episode the students explore the cause and effect of Alex's decisions in the "Now" and the "Again". There are many online graphic organisers to assist the students with this task. The students will then be guided to write their interpretation of events in an essay format.





## Celebrations

### Student Activities

- Begin the lesson with a discussion based around how the different families in your class celebrate Christmas?
- Discuss how celebrations vary between cultures?
- Pose the question: What makes a tradition?

Encourage students to access information on different cultures. Alex's Mum thrives on family traditions. Direct students to write a written response on their blog addressing the following questions.



- Do you think this is typical of most mothers?
- Can you relate to this character in any way?
- Does she remind you of anyone you know?
- Discuss do you ever get too old for family traditions?

Alex makes reference to Maddy's parents being away performing a street act.

- Are these the types of parents that you would expect for Maddy?
- Give evidence from **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** for your answers.

As a class construct a character Map for Maddy. Collate and display class ideas.

- The students are to recollect on some of Maddy's "weirdness", i.e. bath sharks, buying a birthday card in Episode 1 because it reminded her of Alex's eyebrows.
- What clues does all of this information give you about Maddy's home life?
- Discuss with the students street acts that they are familiar with.
- Lead a class discussion to cover juggling, acting, singing, acrobatics, mime, dance and storytelling.

Connect with one of these ideas and design and perform for your peers a short act that Maddy's parents could perform on the streets of Seagate.

In this episode Alex tells Simon that he is going to use this loop year

"To fix something really important, his Mum".

- How did you personally react to this statement?
- Did you expect this type of behaviour from the character of Alex?
- Justify your answer with evidence from the text (episode).

In the "Again" time there is a scene that is shot from the goldfish bowl, from the perspective of the goldfish.

- Why did the Director choose to do this?
- Do you think that the goldfish was symbolic to the "Again" storyline?

## Episode 12

Write a description from the goldfish's perspective

- Describe what the goldfish can see and what its thoughts may be about the King Family.

Discuss with the students cause and effect within a narrative.

A cause is WHY something happens. An effect is WHAT happens.

While viewing Episode 12 of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** the teacher may wish to pause and demonstrate the cause and effect cycle to guide the students through the graphic organiser.

- Students are to complete a cause and effect, events and consequences graphic organiser. These are readily available online.
- Students will need to complete one for the "Now" and one for the "Again" time.
- Compare and contrast the two parts
- Write a cause and consequence essay on your findings.
- What actions were similar?
- Had events changed and were the consequences negative or positive?
- Consider the different impacts on the different characters and whether they were negative or positive impacts.



Each student is to produce an essay analysing Alex's actions and include the consequences of his actions.

A suggested format for the essay is:

- Introduction: present the subject and state the purpose of the analysis in a clear thesis (direct statement clarifying the main idea).
- The Body: In detail explore and analyse the cause and effect by progressing from the most influential cause to the least influential cause.
- The Summary: State what conclusions can be made from the cause/effect relationships, i.e. "Again" time less impact on family life, saved his Mum's feelings.



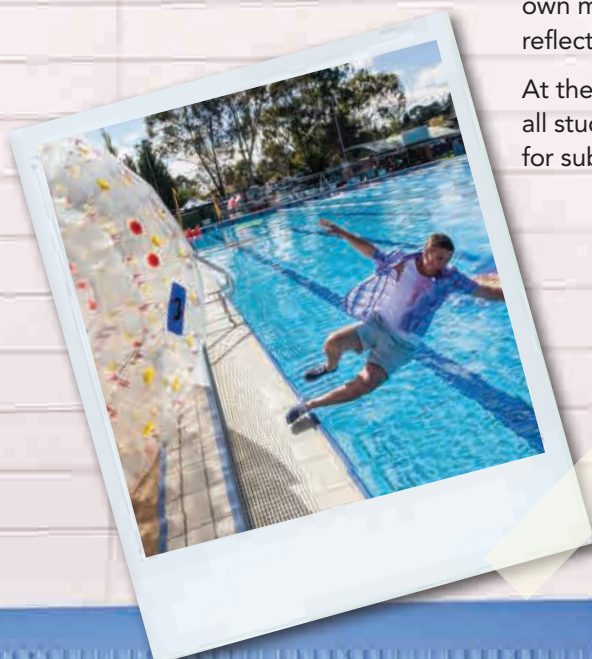
## Episode 13

### The Last Day

It's the end of the summer holidays and Alex (Ned Napier) and his friends decide to enjoy their last day of freedom with a visit to the pool. Once there, Alex can't resist one final attempt at impressing Nicola (Lana Golja), which goes horribly wrong when he loses control of a zorb ball and knocks over everything in his path, including his sister Samantha (Arielle O'Neill), Mr Norris (Syd Brisbane) and Parker (Xander Speight).

His escape route from the bully leads him to the top of the water slide. With Parker close on his tail, he has no choice but to go down the slide; but halfway down, he loses his bathers! As he desperately tries to cling to the sides, Simon (Laurence Boxhall) 'helps' by updating the slide staff on his predicament, which leads to Alex getting shot out the end after they turn on the super-strong water jets. Naked and humiliated, Alex just wants the day - and this YEAR - to be over!

When he gets another chance at the day, Alex decides it's time to be direct and ask Nicola to be his girlfriend straight out - no secret plans. Of course, the path to true love is never smooth and halfway through his deep and meaningful with Nicola, he sees Maddy (Tiarnie Coupland) walking into one of the most embarrassing situations of his whole year. Will Alex take time out to save his best friend or choose his dream girl? And when another birthday dawns, will he finally be able to move on from the worst year of his life?



#### Curriculum Links:

English, the Arts (Visual), Health and Physical Education

**Relevant sub-strands:** Language, literature, literacy, develop planning skills for art-making by exploring techniques and processes used by different artists, practise techniques and processes to enhance representation of ideas in their art-making, being healthy, safe and active, communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing

**Activity Themes/Topics:** Literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, information and communication technology (ICT) capability

### Activities: Symbolism

#### Summary for Teachers

The final episode of **Worst Year OF My Life, Again!** provides opportunities to explore the character development of the main protagonist. The students are to reflect and communicate evidence that the character of Alex King has matured throughout the series.

Students will also be required to ponder their own morality and design an artistic representation reflecting this.

At the completion of this unit ensure that all students' blogs are complete and ready for submission.

## Symbolism

### Student Activities

Before viewing the final episode request that the students write a written response on their blog addressing the following questions.

- Predict how the series of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** will conclude?
- Will all the audiences' questions be answered?
- Compare how both Simon and Maddy have reacted to Alex's loop throughout the series?
- Discuss the different approaches to Alex's dilemma.
- Discuss who the students think is "the better friend" and justify their answer.
- Consider if Simon and Maddy will react differently to Alex on the last day of this 14th year episode of the series **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**

### Pre-Review the Character of Alex King

- List words that describe the character of Alex King. Scribe as a class list.
- Has he learnt any lessons in the AGAIN?
- Are his intentions selfish or honorable?

"All girls love daring, extreme sportiness, don't they"?

Alex King made this in reference to Troy, his competition for Nicola's affection.

- Discuss if there is some truth to this statement?
- Discuss if you think that this is a stereotype?
- Is it a healthy stereotype for teenage communities?

Consider if the character of Simon perpetuated this stereotype in the "Again" during Episode 13.

- Get the students to articulate the change in his overall demeanour.
- Note the subtle physical appearances of Simon in the "Again" section.
- What was the overall effect of these changes, was he really more attractive?

In previous episodes, Maddy has questioned "if the temporal loop was wasted on Alex?"

- Discuss did she have a point. Use evidence to substantiate your ideas.

"It's like it is the last day on Earth" is how Alex, Simon and Maddy are feeling.

- The students are to consider if there was a change in mood in the trio of protagonists.
- Were there changes to their existing relationship?
- Consider the emotions that the characters must have felt. Scribe the class views.
- Identify the stereotypes in the friend montage.
- Did you think a montage was a good choice for the Director to make to demonstrate the characters' feelings?
- Consider if it was a more powerful story than just dialogue.
- Discuss the reaction of the characters when they were unsure of what tomorrow would hold.

Explain to the students that the definition of a cliff hanger is when the narrative ends unresolved, to draw the audience back to a future episode or series for the resolution.

- Discuss if the audience of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** are experiencing a cliff hanger?

Discuss what your reaction would be if you only had a year to live, what would you do with your time?

### Post-Review of Character Alex King

- Discuss how you feel about the character of Alex King at the end of the series. Has your opinion changed from your Pre episode review?
- Did you expect this type of behaviour from this character?
- Consider if previous episodes have alluded to a change in character?

Design and present a visual, symbolic representation of the life lessons you learnt from the entire series of **Worst Year of My Life, Again!**

Direct students to outline and explain the symbolism that they have chosen explaining what their artwork represents. The task can be done digitally, by craft or by hand.



## Crew

### Bernadette O'Mahony, Executive Producer/Producer

A highly experienced Producer and Executive Producer of award-winning children's television, Bernadette is also the Head of Development and Production at the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF) where she oversees the Foundation's development, production and international distribution activities. Bernadette has over 30 years experience in the film and television industry and her credits include *Crash Zone*, *Legacy of the Silver Shadow* and *Round the Twist* (Series 3). She Produced and Executive produced *Mortified* which won the AFI for Best Children's Television Program and was nominated for an International Emmy, and Executive Produced series including *Lockie Leonard*, *Dance Academy*, *My Place*, *Fleabitten!*, *You're Skitting Me* and *Bushwhacked!* In addition to her role on **Worst Year of My Life, Again!** Bernadette is currently Executive Producer on the wildlife series *WAC*; and on the pre-school series *Hoopla!*, currently shooting in Beijing, China.

### Ross Allsop, Executive Producer/Producer

Ross Allsop has worked in the local television industry for 30 years – working on various drama productions across all the major networks. He began his career at the ABC before moving into the freelance world in 1993. In the past five years Ross co-produced *Rush* for Network Ten, and was part of the team at Southern Star that established long running series *Offspring* and *Tangle*. He moved on to the Nine Network's Beaconsfield and, most recently was the Line Producer on the successful ABC1 series, *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*. *Worst Year Of My Life, Again!* is a further step up – Producing a series in tandem with Bernadette O'Mahony and the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF).

### Pino Amenta, Director (Episodes 1-3, 6-8, 13)

One of Australia's most experienced television directors, Pino's career began in the 1970s, working on shows including *Chopper Squad*, *Bellamy*, *Taurus Rising*, *Sons and Daughters*, and *The Flying Doctors*. In addition to series, he directed several seminal mini-series of the 80s and 90s, including *All the Rivers Run*, *The Flying Doctors*, *Anzacs*, *My Brother Tom* and *Sword of Honour*. He has an extensive resume of children's television programs, including *All Together Now*, *Crash Zone*, *Chuck Finn*, *Round the Twist*, *Noah & Saskia*, *Holly's Heroes* and *Mortified*. Most recently he has directed *Packed to the Rafters*, *Winners and Losers* and *Conspiracy 365*.

### Darren Ashton, Director (Episodes 4, 9, 12)

Darren is one of Australia's leading directors of commercials and has won numerous international awards. He transitioned to film and TV through the short film genre with *The Extra*, which won the Best Short Film award at various festivals, second prize at Sydney's Tropfest and received two nominations at the AFI's for Best Short Film and Best Editing. In 2005, he co-wrote and directed his first feature film *Thunderstruck*. His second film, *Razzle Dazzle*, was selected for over 20 film festivals around the world, including Official Selection at the Berlin, Edinburgh, Los Angeles Independent Film Festivals and was the opening night film at the New York International Children's Film Festival. More recently he was Executive Producer on *Not Suitable For Children*. His television credits include *Bed of Roses*, *Rush* and *Offspring*. He is currently attached to direct the film adaptation of Emily Griffin's novel, *Love The One You're With* starring Isla Fisher.

### John Hartley, Director (Episodes 5, 10-11)

John Hartley made the transition to director in 2009, on the series *Rush*. He has worked as a first assistant director on some of Australia's most loved TV programs, including *Lowdown*, *Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo*, *Offspring*, *Tangle* and *The Secret Life of Us*. John's children's television credits include *K9*, *The Elephant Princess*, *Mortified* and *Round the Twist*.

## Credits

**Created by:** Mark Brotherhood

**Produced by:** Ross Allsop, Bernadette O'Mahony

**Executive Producers:** Jenny Buckland, Bernadette O'Mahony, Ross Allsop

**Directors:** Pino Amenta (Episodes 1-3, 6-8, 13), Darren Ashton (Episodes 4, 9, 12), John Hartley (Episodes 5, 10-11)

**Script Producer:** Rachel Davis

**Writers:** Mark Brotherhood (Episodes 1, 2, 6, 10-13, Sam Carroll (Episode 10), Kirsten Fisher (Episodes 5, 8, Brendan Luno (Episodes 3, 7, 9), Peter Mattessi (Episode 4)

**Director of Photography:** Craig Barden ACS

**Production Design:** Otello Stolfo

**Costume Design:** Michael Chisholm

**Casting:** Lou Mitchell at Maura Fay Casting

**Editors:** Philip Watts (Episodes 1, 4, 7-9, 12), Peter Carrodus ASE (Episodes 2-3, 5-6, 10-11, 13)

**Original Music:** Darren Middleton, Simon Walbrook

**Production Manager:** Angelique Badenoch

## Cast

ALEX KING (Ned Napier)

SIMON BIRCH (Laurence Boxhall)

MADDY KENT (Tiarnie Coupland)

MR NORRIS (Syd Brisbane)

PARKER (Xander Speight)

HOWE (Liam Erck)

NICOLA GREY (Lana Golja)

LOREN (Kaiting Yap)

AMY (Jessie Blott)

HANNAH (Bellamy Duke)

TOBY (Fergus McLaren)

TROY (Kingsley O'Connor)

ALEX'S MUM (Annie Jones)

ALEX'S DAD (Jeremy Stanford)

SAMANTHA (Arielle O'Neill)

AUNTIE ETHEL (Anne Phelan)







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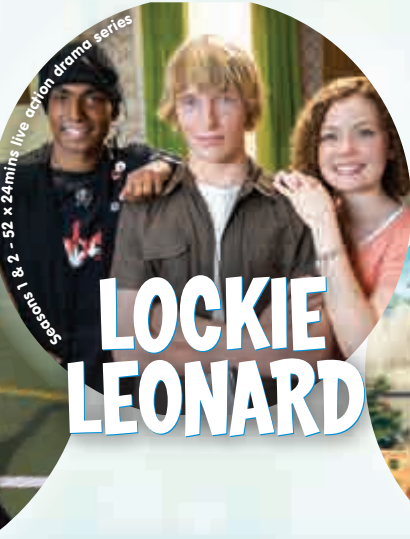
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