

A REVIEW



1 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 Do you enjoy watching reality TV shows? Why? / Why not?
- 2 Why do you think reality TV shows are so popular?
- 3 Do you think you can learn anything from watching reality TV shows?

2 Read a review of the show 'Best Home Baker'. Does the reviewer mention any of your ideas from Exercise 1?

BEST HOME BAKER

For me, cooking has never been an especially enjoyable activity, and I certainly have no particular talent for it. So, I must admit I started watching this show mainly out of curiosity, as so many of my friends were regular and enthusiastic viewers. To be fair, I was unsure exactly what to expect, but after only one episode I was well and truly drawn in, and have not missed a single show since.

In brief, the show is a baking competition. Each week, the judges set a series of tasks for the competitors, from producing the perfect apple tart to preparing sweet treats for a child's birthday. The final task each week is always a 'showstopper' where the challenge for competitors is to produce a spectacular-looking and delicious-tasting cake of their own invention. One competitor is eliminated by the judges each week, until a winner is declared in the final episode.

In my personal view, the popularity of the show is due to the personalities of the competitors, who come from a range of different backgrounds but share an intense passion for baking. Each week viewers watch as they are put under pressure to produce excellent results to a set time, and share with them their triumphs and disasters. Their enthusiasm is contagious. It seems to me that there is something wonderfully motivating about watching people who are passionate about a hobby.

I was certainly inspired to try my hand at producing my own 'showstoppers', and I learnt to measure my success on my own terms, not against others.

The only downside to the show is that sometimes the challenges seem to be unnecessarily tricky, as if to lead the participants into making mistakes. But overall, I would say that it provides wonderful entertainment.

3 Read the review again. Make notes in the table.

	Paragraph	Notes
Why the reviewer started watching the show		
The format of the show		
Reasons for its popularity		
What the reviewer learnt from the show		
Criticisms of the show		

4 Look at the Key Language for a review. Complete the phrases with words from the box. Use the review in Exercise 2 to help you.

brief downside fair for must personal
seems would

KEY LANGUAGE FOR A REVIEW

Giving opinions

In my opinion, ... 1 me, ... In my
2 view, ... I 3 admit, ...
To be 4 , ... It 5 to me
that ... I 6 say that ...

Introducing criticisms

The only 7 is that ... My only criticism
would be that ...

Summarising

To sum up, ... Overall, ... In 8 , ...

5 Complete the comments about ‘Best Home Baker’ with the correct form of the words in the box.

challenge competitor declare eliminate judge

- 1 I was so disappointed when Shona was
She deserved to win!
- 2 Sometimes the seem unnecessarily harsh, and criticise people unfairly.
- 3 This week’s was clearly too difficult for some of the bakers!
- 4 For me, Rob is the best He has created some wonderful showstoppers!
- 5 I really hope that Maxine is the winner!

6 Write statements 1–5 as personal opinions. Use the words in brackets.

- 1 ‘This is by far the best reality show on TV.’
.....
(opinion)
- 2 ‘The first few episodes were slightly disappointing.’
.....
(admit)
- 3 ‘All reality shows share some common features.’
.....
(seems)
- 4 ‘This show will remain popular for many years.’
.....
(say)
- 5 ‘The competitors are not always treated fairly.’
.....
(personal)

7 Choose the correct word in *italics* to complete the sentences.

- 1 To *sum* / *conclude* up, I would highly recommend this show.
- 2 My only *downside* / *criticism* would be that sometimes the competitors are put under too much pressure.
- 3 In *overall* / *brief*, it is a fairly standard talent show.
- 4 The only downside *would be* / *is* that sometimes the wrong competitors seem to be eliminated.

8 Work in pairs. Read the task. Then choose a reality TV show and make notes in the plan.

Send us a review of a reality TV show you have watched or heard about. It can be any kind of reality TV show, e.g. a talent show, or a show about jobs, a hobby or family life. Describe the format of the show briefly. Why do you think it is so popular? What can people learn from it?

PLAN YOUR REVIEW

Name of the show

Format of the show

Reasons for its popularity

What people can learn from it

9 Write your review. Use the notes in your plan and phrases from the *Key Language* box.

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10 Work with another pair. Swap reviews. How many phrases from the *Key Language* box can you find in the review? Would you like to watch the show it describes? Why? / Why not?