

Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

January 7, 2016

Article: “Cartoon series brings laughs to raging immigration debate”

Monday, January 4, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, NW Monday B4

Pre-Reading:

Before reading the article, read the title and look at the photograph. What do you know about the “raging immigration debate?”

Vocabulary:

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today’s article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the “context,” or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

embattled

furor

dunderheaded

patriarch

apoplectic

inculcated

compelled

satire

perpetuate

archetypes

confiscated

stint

interplanetary

mastermind

propels

Comprehension:

1. What issues does the new Fox animated comedy “Bordertown” target?
2. What is the second episode about?
3. What is character Bud Buckwald’s fear?
4. Bordertown began as a modern-day update of what 1970s sitcom?
5. How is Bud Buckwald like Archie Bunker?
6. How does shoe creator Hentemann relate to the immigration story?
7. Why was Hentemann compelled to write Bordertown?
8. Why did Hentemann bring in a team that included Latino writers?
9. Writer Lalo Alcaraz says the shows characters are not stereotypes but what?
10. Why is the episode about border walls timely?
11. What show did Hentemann run before Borderland?
12. How does Hentemann describe the difference between Bordertown and Family Guy?

Post-Reading:

Read the following passage from the article and discuss the following questions in a group:

“The series’ premiere dealt with a toughest-in-the-nation anti-immigration bill passed by Mexifornia, the U.S. desert community where ‘Bordertown’ is set. . . .

According to creator Mark Hentemann, ‘Bordertown’ began as a modern-day update of Archie Bunker, the apoplectic working man from the pioneering 1970s sitcom ‘All in the Family.’ Like Archie, Bud is ‘a white guy who feels he’s losing his place in the world. He’s contrasted with an immigrant who’s building a life for himself in the United States.’

Do you think a TV series is the appropriate place to deal with immigration issues? Why or why not? How do you think viewers will respond to the show? Would you rather watch the show with your family or with your friends? Why? As you learn about the show, do you think you identify with any of the characters?

Building Language Skills:

Read the following passage, and complete the activity below:

“Let’s get one thing straight: Donald Trump is not a consultant for ‘Bordertown.’ To be sure, this new Fox animated comedy does target issues like immigration, the drug war and the embattled American dream. But it’s been in development since 2007, long before the furor sparked by Trump upon his entry last June into the presidential race.”

What stance has presidential candidate Donald Trump taken on immigration and border wars? Use recent issues of The Seattle Times to gather information. In a short essay summarize Trump’s opinions and actions. Do you agree with Trump’s opinion? Why or why not? If you were running for president, what stance on immigration and border wars would you take?

Comprehension Question Answers:

1. The comedy targets immigration, the drug war and the embattled American dream.
2. The second episode is about “the construction of a border wall meant to protect Mexifornia from undesirables from down Mexico way.”
3. Bud Buckwald’s fear is that his American dream is slipping away as ethnic minorities are projected to become the majority.
4. Bordertown began as a modern-day update of the Archie Bunker character from “All in the Family.”
5. Bud Buckwald is like Archie Bunker in that he “is a white guy who feels he’s losing his place in the world.”
6. Hentemann relates to the immigration story because his father used to tell him how he came over from Germany in the ‘20s with nothing, seeking a better life, working three jobs.
7. Hentemann says that every family has an immigration story and sees the show as an opportunity to do smart, cultural satire.
8. Hentemann brought in a team that included Latino writer because he didn’t want to perpetuate cultural stereotypes.
9. Alcaraz says the characters are archetypes.
10. The episode about border walls is timely because of presidential candidate Donald Trump’s stance on border control.
11. Before Borderland Hentemann ran Family Guy.
12. Hentemann says that Bordertown aims to dig deeper than Family Guy and hopes that it will break new ground as relevant satire in the way ‘All in the Family’ did.