

Week 3: Assignment

This assignment challenges you to apply key concepts from Chapters 6-18 of our course material to develop a short (3-4 minute) comedic routine. You will not only create original material but also critically analyze your choices, demonstrating your understanding of how comedic principles function in practice. This is about *doing* and *explaining why* you made your decisions, not just defining terms.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this assignment, you will be able to:

- (i) Apply various comedic writing techniques in original material.
- (ii) Analyze the role of victim, status, and persona in your comedic work.
- (iii) Identify and refine jokes to avoid ambiguity and maximize impact.
- (iv) Strategize the flow and energy of a comedic routine.
- (v) Reflect on your creative process and the practical application of comedic theory.

Instructions

Please be assured that this assignment is not testing how funny you are.

You are judged merely on the basis of the understanding & application of the theoretical concepts. As far as the jokes are concerned, you can write those in English/Hindi/Hinglish.

Part 1: Developing Your Comedic Persona & Core Routine

1. **Comedic Persona Statement:** Before writing any jokes, articulate your desired comedic persona.
 - (i) Briefly describe your persona.
 - (ii) What is your intended **status** (high, low, idiot savant)? And why?
 - (iii) What are your 2-3 main comedic styles? How might "clashing styles" be used?
2. **Topic & Initial Brainstorm:**
 - (i) Choose *one* central topic for your routine (e.g., a personal experience, a societal observation, a quirky hobby).
 - (ii) Use the "Start with a List" principle (Chapter 15) to jot down at least 10 raw, unfiltered thoughts, observations, or experiences related to your chosen topic. These don't have to be funny yet.

3. "Confirming" Joke:

Craft *one* "Confirming" joke about yourself that aligns with your persona. Write it out clearly.

Part 2: Crafting & Refining Your Jokes

Now, develop a 3-4 minute routine from your brainstormed ideas. Your routine should be incorporating the following elements. For each requirement, clearly label the joke(s) or section(s) in your routine.

1. Victim Analysis:

For any of your 5 jokes, explicitly state who or what the *victim* is. Explain **why** this victim is appropriate for your chosen comedic persona. If any joke targets someone undeserving, explain how you balance it (e.g., by making yourself the victim, revealing a flaw).

2. Triple Punch:

Craft at least **1** joke in your routine that aims for a "Triple Punch". Now, break down its components:

(i) Cerebral: What thought connection does it make?

(ii) Emotional: What feeling does it evoke?

(iii) Visual: What mental image does it create?

3. Detail & Refinement:

(i) Take **one** of your jokes that started as a basic idea and show its evolution.

(ii) Present the "**before**" (a simpler, less refined version) and the "**after**" (your final, polished version).

(iii) Explain *specific* word choices, sensory details, or rhythmic changes you made to "mine it further" and elevate it from "good to great."

4. Toppers/Tags:

For **at least 2** primary punchlines in your routine, add a "Topper" (or tag).

5. Misdirection:

(i) Craft at least **one** joke that relies heavily on "Misdirection."

(ii) After the joke, explain the initial assumption you want the audience to make (the "setup" thought) and how your punchline provides an unexpected twist (the "spinoff thought"). Remember to keep the "balloon" airtight to avoid any leaks.

6. Ambiguity & Repetition Check:

- (i) Review your *entire* routine. Identify any potential areas of *ambiguity*. If you find one, describe the "double-exit maze" it creates and explain how you would "fix" it (even if your final version is already clear).
- (ii) Identify any instances of *repetition* of keywords. If you used "bookending" or "flipping" intentionally, clearly highlight it and explain its effect. If you found "careless repetition," explain why it needed to be avoided.

Part 3: Performance Flow & Reflection

1. Rolling Energy & Tension Plan (Chapter 9 & 10):

- (i) Map out the sequence of your jokes in the routine.
- (ii) For each joke, label it as a "Ball" (generates energy) or a "Cube" (requires existing energy). Justify your classification.
- (iii) Explain your rationale for the chosen sequence, specifically how you ensure "cubes" are preceded by "balls" or how you build/maintain energy throughout.
- (iv) If any joke uses tension, briefly describe how it's built and released.

2. Overall Reflection:

- (i) What was the most challenging aspect of applying these concepts to your own writing?
- (ii) Which concept did you find most surprisingly effective or difficult to implement?