The Dos and Don’ts of Writing an Original TV Pilot - Reading
(http://masteringfilm.com/the-dos-and-donts-of-writing-an-original-tv-pilot/)

Part 1
Fill in the gaps with the words from the box.

consistent stand out devices infinite introduce

Pilots Do’s
Do find a premise that’s fresh and original. Mimicking what’s already on television will not make you ………………in the writing crowd.

Do choose a premise that has …………. story possibilities. Networks crave long-running series like Law & Order and Friends.

Do set up the series franchise. Your pilot script should act as a blueprint for the entire series. It should …………..the premise, characters and structure that will come into play on a weekly basis. Only use flashbacks, voiceovers, or other clever storytelling ………………if you envision them in future episodes.

Do be sure your characters talk in distinct, …………..voices. If a character speaks in slang he must always speak in slang.

Which highlighted words from the text mean:

a) a right to sell a company’s products in a particular area using the company’s name
b) an early plan or design that explains how something might be achieved
c) an idea or theory on which a statement or action is based
d) to have a strong feeling of wanting something

Fill in the gaps with words a-d:

Many young children often ………….their parents’ attention.
The experiment is based on the …………. that children learn faster than adults.
He opened a restaurant but has to pay fees for the ………………
The Ministry is working on a ……………..on how to reform the education system.
Part 2

Use the words in brackets to form a word that fits in the space in the same line

Pilot Don’ts
Don’t hold back too much information. If you’re thinking about dropping a big bomb in Season 5, episode 10, and then everyone will “get it”, think again. When readers are ……………….. (CONFUSION) by a lack of information in your pilot script, there won’t be a season 1.

Don’t make the pilot episode all about backstory. The characters should be in ………………..(MOVE) when we meet them, and backstories should emerge in natural, character-specific dialogue.

Don’t write a pilot that will only be of interest to a ………………..(LIMIT) audience. Tapping into universal themes and future trends will ……………….. (SURE) more viewers, which, for networks translates into more advertising dollars.

Don’t be shy. In this racy age of television, bold and daring will take you a lot ……………….. (FAR) than bland. Executives would much rather read an edgier sample that proves you have the to take chances and push the envelope.

Which highlighted expressions from the text mean:

a) to go further than the usual limits by doing something new, dangerous, etc
b) to announce shocking news
c) to manage to use something in a way that brings good results

Fill in the gaps with expressions a-c:

With this new product the company is trying to ………………..the Asian market.

Maybe you should talk to your parents about your plans instead of just ………………..on them.

Some teachers really ……………….. when they fraternise with their students outside of class.
What was so good about these TV pilots? - Listening

Fill in the gaps with words you hear.

10. The X-Files
It showcases the partners’ …………………………….

9. 24
It throws the audience into …………………………

8. Mad Men
It has intelligent …………………………… and retro ………………………

7. Prison Break
It combines an intriguing ………………………… and thrilling ………………………

6. The Walking Dead
It has a cliffhanger ………………………

5. Game of Thrones
It was highly ………………………
It combines stunning ……………………… and epic …………………………elements.

4. The Sopranos
It shows excellent …………………………… and ……………………………

3. Twin Peaks
It is praised for its creation of ……………………… and …………………………storylines.

2. Breaking Bad
It introduces the audience to the ……………………… world of the protagonist.

1. Lost
It’s regarded one of the best pilots in the TV history due to its special ……………………… and ………………………cast.