

Specific Area Focus: Group Activity

- We are now going to split into separate groups, where each group will have a specific focus to analyse the meaning in the advert through media languages.



Each group will now have a specific focus to analyse.

Group 1: Genre & Structure/narrative

- Summarise the narrative (story) of the advert.
- Is it linear/non linear
- Open/closed narrative?
- Realist/anti-realist?
- How does the advert: Follow conventions of a charity advert?
- Subvert conventions of a charity advert?

Group 2: Camera Work

- Who is the main focus of the framing?
- What are the dominant shot types used? Why?
- What are the dominant angles used? Why?
- What is distinct about the camera movement?

Group 3: Editing & Sound

- How would you describe the pace of the editing?
- Look at your editing glossary (*terms 141-165*) – what features have you seen in this advert?
- Music/dialogue/voiceover etc.
- How effective was the soundtrack of this advert?
- What other sounds were present?
- Look at the sound glossary (*terms 165 onwards*) – what features have you seen in this advert?

Group 4: Visual Codes

- What impact did the Locations have on the message of the advert?
- What was effective in terms of the costume?
- When was low key Lighting used? When was high key lighting used?
- What were the dominant colours in the advert? Why do you think they were chosen?
- What about the use of language?

Component 1: Media Products, Industries & Audiences

Scaffolding Knowledge: Layering Media Language Theory

You could look at applying both Roland Barthes & Levi Strauss to this advertisement in regards to media language.



Use the theory cards below to apply the Water Aid advert to Barthes & Strauss.

THEORY: BARTHES SEMIOTICS

Enigma/Hermeneatic Code	This refers to any element of the narrative that is not fully explained, it becomes a mystery to the audience
Action/ Proairetic Code	Something that hints at a specific possible event in the narrative. It can get the viewer engaged in the narrative
Semantic Code	This code refers to the connotation the images, words and sounds have and how they suggest additional meaning to the audience. They are like visual codes.
Symbolic Code	The is where there is a much deeper level meaning , almost myth like, with ideological meaning that is in keeping with the society beliefs.
Referential/Culture Code	This code refers to anything in the text that refers to knowledge that is external and that the audience might have to help them better understand what is happening inside the text e.g. knowledge of history is needed to understand some war films

Codes	Application to Water Aid
Enigma/Hermeneutic Code	
Semantic Code	
Symbolic Code	

THEORY: STRUCTURALISM – LEVI STRAUSS

Structuralism - Levi-Strauss

- Lévi-Strauss believed that texts can best be understood through an examination of their underlying structure.
- He believed that meaning is dependent upon (and produced through) pairs of oppositions .
- The way in which these binary oppositions are resolved can have particular ideological significance.
- How does the advert create conceptual binary opposition?

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What binary oppositions are evident in the Water Aid advert?



THE TIP FOR THIS TASK ARE UPSIDE DOWN ON PURPOSE. TRY YOURSELF FIRST.

- **Hermeneutic/Enigma** – How does the opening of the advert create suspense to engage the audience?
- At what point is the enigma resolved? How do the audio codes for example support this resolution?
- **Semantic Code** – How do the lyrics between 00:31 – 00:45 “Make me feel, make me feel, like I belong... don't leave me” add another layer of meaning to the visual code and enhance the message of the advert?
- **Symbolic Code** – What does the landscape suggest the the viewer?
- **Binary Opposites – points of consideration:** Visual Codes, Audio Codes, Implied message of the advert.

TIPS

Water Aid: Representations



Investigating Representation.

Representation is one of the main areas of the theoretical framework you will be required to explore in Section A, you will need to consider:

- The way in which events, issues individuals and social groups are represented.
- The way in which the media through representation, constructs a version of reality.
- The processes that lead media producers to make choices about how to represent events issues and social groups.
- How and why stereotypes can be used positively and negatively.
- How and why particular social groups may be under or mis-represented.
- How media representations convey values, attitudes and beliefs about the world, which are reinforced across a wide range of media representations.
- How audiences interpret & respond to these representations.



KEY TERMS

Ethnicity:

Many people confuse ethnicity & race. Your ethnicity is defined by your cultural identity, which may demonstrate itself through customs, dress or food for example. Ethnicity suggests an identity that is based on a sense of place, ideology or religion. You can be British but of Jewish ethnicity, for instance.

Race:

Your race is defined by the fact that you descend from a common ancestor giving you a particular set of characteristics. These may be related to the colour of your skin and facial features for example.

Tokenism:

Providing a cursory of superficial representation of those groups in society who are often under-represented in order to convey an impression of equality and inclusivity.

General Representation of Ethnicity:

- The representation of people from other cultures in the media has changed dramatically since the earlier days, when they were defined in terms of their potential for comedy and their 'foreignness.'
- People from other cultures still tend to be identified by their differences and their 'otherness.' This can be used to offer both positive and negative representations of ethnicity in the media.
- Just like other groups in the media, there are stereotypical representations of ethnicity defined generally by racial characteristics.
- Stereotypes misrepresentation and under-representation are even more dangerous when dealing with ethnicity compared to gender, as the representation that is constructed through the media is often the only experience of these cultures that some audiences will encounter.

As one of the set products for this form is the charity advert for Water Aid, you will need to consider how representations of ethnicity are constructed in this sub-genre and for what purpose. This advert is different from others in this sub-genre in that it uses visual codes to construct representations of under-developed countries that are more positive. **Let's explore how this is achieved.**

Social context:

An interesting text to consider in comparison would be Water Aid's 'No Choice' TV advert from 2013 which is more conventionally constructed and represents the suffering of its main 'character' in a more explicit and emotive way.



Component 1: Media Products, Industries & Audiences



How does media language construct traditional representations of ethnicity in the 'No Choice' advert?

Media Language	What is the representation of Ethnicity?
Visual Codes	
Technical Codes	
Audio Codes	
Genre Conventions	
Narrative/Structure	

Component 1: Media Products, Industries & Audiences

In response to one of their earlier campaigns, and as was mentioned earlier in this topic.

- Water Aid; launching the Rain For Good campaign, said that it had “deliberately broken away from the traditional charity ad formula” in response to the public’s desensitisation to traditional fundraising tactics. The stereotypical ‘victim’ needing our help is an archetype with which the audience would be familiar from many other charity adverts. This would perhaps make the more positive representation of Claudia.
- It aims to subvert the more common stereotype of ‘suffering’.

Let’s compare those traditional representations with Water Aid’s 2016 advert which focused on Claudia.



Use your notes from your media language analysis on pages 12 – 15 to help you discuss how Water Aid subverts conventions & constructs a positive representation of ethnicity.

How is Claudia represented positively through what Stuart Hall describes as the process of selection & combination? Consider:

- Visual Codes including dress codes
- Age
- Characters in the advert
- Camera, Editing & Sound techniques

Scaffolding Knowledge: Layering Representation Theory

You could look at applying different representation theories to Water Aid to help you better understand the representations that are constructed in media texts. Having already considered Hall's process of selection & combination, let's consider some others:



Use the theory cards below to apply the Water Aid advert to relevant 'rep' theories.

THEORY: DAVID GAUNTLETT - IDENTITY

David Gauntlett's theoretical perspective revolves around the idea of the autonomy of the audience, and how they use and respond to different media products.

- Identity is now consciously constructed, the media provide audiences and users with the resources to allow them to construct their own identities.
- The media contains a huge number of messages (ideologies) about identity and acceptable lifestyles.
- While in the past, media products tended to convey straightforward messages about ideal types of male and female identities, contemporary products offer audiences a more diverse range of icons and characters, allowing them to 'pick and mix' different ideas.

KEY TERMS

Ideology:

A set of values and beliefs that have broader social or cultural currency. This may be implicit or explicit as is evident in texts such as tabloid newspapers.

TIP

David Gauntlett is a professor of creativity and design at the university of Westminster. He writes about the ways in which digital media give people new opportunities to create and connect. Visit his website to further your understanding of his theoretical perspective. www.theory.org.uk

How could you apply David Gauntlett's theory of identity to the Water Aid advert?



THEORY: EDWARD SAID & PAUL GILROY – POST COLONIALISM

- Open your theory booklets to page 27. Read about post-colonial theory as suggested by Edward Said & Paul Gilroy, completing the 'Diaspora' term task on page 28.

Does Water Aid re-inforce colonial power? How?

Post-colonialism attempts to focus on the oppression of those who were ruled under colonisation.

This could come in the form of:

- Political oppression
- Economic oppression
- Social/cultural oppression
- Psychological oppression

Component 1: Media Products, Industries & Audiences

Choose a 15-mark question to complete:

Easy: Does the Water Aid advert encode a 'version of reality?'

Medium: How has the representation of the Water Aid advert been constructed to communicate a message to its audience?

Water Aid: Audiences



Understanding Audiences.

- An understanding of audiences and how they respond to media products is an essential aspect of the Media Studies course.
- The relationship between the media product and the audience is fluent and changing.
- Unlike in the past, there is no longer assumed to be only one way of interpreting a product and only one audience response.
- Audiences are not mass; their responses are complex and sophisticated, and are influenced by a range of factors.

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Social & Cultural Context:

As discussed earlier, contemporary audiences are familiar with charity advertising campaigns and appeals. Telethons such as ‘Comic Relief’ and ‘Children in Need’ regularly raise amazing sums of money by encouraging audiences to fundraise & donate. Certain campaigns will reflect particular needs at specific times, for example the Syrian Refugee crisis and the famine in Africa in 2017. The campaigns usually serve to highlight the differences and the social injustices in certain parts of the world, and as such are related to the social and cultural context.



Who is the target audience for the Water Aid advert?

Demographic	Your answer	What evidence do you have from the advert to prove this?
Gender		
Age		
Living situation		
Occupation		



Apply Uses & Gratifications to the Water Aid advert? [Pg. 16 of theory book]

How does the Water Aid advert target/appeal, reach & address its audience?

You've completed a huge amount of analysis in relation to media languages and representation. How are these used to target the Water Aid audience. Look back through your notes and discuss the following areas:

Area of focus:	How – through media language & representation?
Social Media/technology	
The use of a real young woman	
Audio Codes	
Character archetype	
Positive Representation	

How may audiences interpret this advert?

THEORY: STUART HALL – AUDIENCE RESPONSES

Stuart Hall accepted that audiences were active, not passive, and suggested that there were three main ways in which an audience may respond to a media product:

The preferred reading:

- Where the audience accepts the dominant reading and interprets the messages contained within the product in the way that the producer intended. This is usually the case if the product reflects the ideas and beliefs of the audience. For example, the readers of the Daily Mail will broadly agree with the paper's stance on issues such as immigration and young people, or they would not read the newspaper. There is, therefore, little for the audience to challenge.

The negotiated reading:

- Is where the audience accepts some of the product's messages and disagrees with others, therefore negotiating over their acceptance of what is presented to them. For example, an audience may agree with sections of the press that something must be done about the numbers of migrants but feels that they are being represented badly and that we have a moral duty to help.

Oppositional readings:

- Where the audience does not agree with the ideology of the product or its content. This may be related to the culture, age, gender or other factors affecting audience response. For example, an older person watching Family Guy may have an oppositional reading of the text because of the language and style of humour.

Different audiences may interpret the same media products in different ways. Consider the following points relating to the Water Aid advert.

1. Using the screenshot from their website below, how is the audience positioned? (Annotate)

The screenshot shows the WaterAid website's 'Get involved' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the WaterAid logo, links for 'Get involved', 'Why WaterAid?', and 'Blog', a search icon, and a blue 'Donate' button. The main heading is 'Get involved', followed by the text: 'Challenge yourself, get campaigning, volunteer with us. However you want to make a difference, we have the tips, ideas and resources you need to get started today.' Below this, there are eight columns of text, each with a heading and a short description:

- Start fundraising**: Find everything you need to get your fundraising underway.
- Join an event**: Feel a buzz like no other. Be part of team #FinishThirst.
- Campaign with us**: Spark a chain reaction and change the world for good.
- Include a gift in your will**: Leave the world a better place with a life-changing legacy.
- Schools**: Your class can save lives as they learn with our free resources.
- Philanthropy**: Give a gift that will transform lives, within a generation.
- Corporate partners**: Invite your staff and customers to be part of something special.
- Other ways to give**: Don't stop now! Get inspired with even more great ideas.

Component 1: Media Products, Industries & Audiences

2. The most obvious literal response is that Water Aid wants you to accept the preferred/dominant reading constructed by the creators and donate. That the audience can influence a positive outcome show in the advert by donating their money.

However, how may the audience respond with a:

Reading	Why?
Negotiated Reading	
Oppositional Reading	

TIPS – What can affect the audience response?

- **Gender**
- **Age**
- **Ethnicity**
- **Culture & Cultural experience** – upbringing and experiences. Media products also influence our experiences and thus our responses to products.
- **Cultural Competence** – where understanding is shared among those who use the products.
- **Situated Culture** – concerns the 'situation' of the audience. This could be literal – where the audience is actually situated.

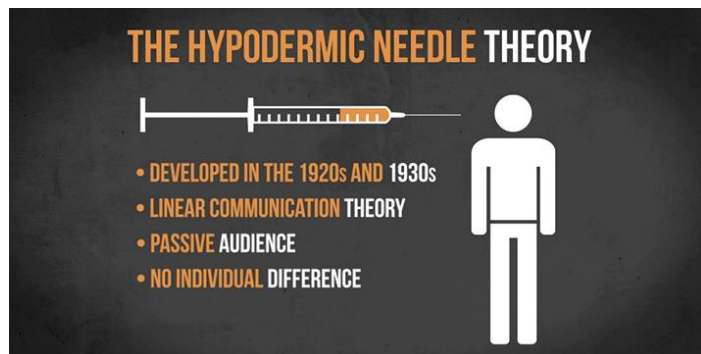
Albert Bandura – Media Effects

THEORY: ALBERT BANDURA – MEDIA EFFECTS

Media effects theories are concerned with the effects that the media may have on audiences. Albert Bandura is a psychologist whose research explores the way in which the media can influence social behaviour. The main principles of his 'social learning theory' include:

- The idea that the media can implant ideas in the mind of the audience directly.
- The idea that audiences acquire attitudes, emotional responses and new styles of conduct through modelling.
- The idea that media representations of transgressive behaviour such as violence or physical aggression can lead audience members to imitate those forms of behaviour.

This is also known as the 'Hypodermic Needle Model, long since considered outdated.



How might this apply to Water Aid?

George Gerbner – Cultivation Theory

THEORY: GERBNER'S CULTIVATION THEORY

Building on Gauntlett's theory of identity, as been highlighted, advertising strategies and the audience reach of advertisements developed dramatically in the 1950s. This theory can be useful in considering the ways in which audiences of the time have been influenced by advertising.

- Gerbner's idea was that exposure to related patterns of representation over long periods of time can shape and influence the way in which people perceive the world around them by cultivating particular views and opinions.
- The theory argues that the media is able to cultivate a particular a particular view of the world over a long period of time; it contains a form of storytelling about the world that the audience expect.

TASK

Ideology:

A set of values and beliefs that have broader social or cultural currency. This may be implicit or explicit as is evident in texts such as tabloid newspapers.

TIP

Use your theory guide on page 33 to explore the theory in more detail.

Areas for consideration:

- Language
- USP
- Gestures/expression

This particular theory could be both applied and challenged by Water Aid. Use the table below to discuss.

Applies	Challenges

Component 1: Media Products, Industries & Audiences

Choose a 15-mark question to answer:

Easy: How can Gerbner's cultivation theory be used in relation to Water Aid?

Medium: How have the producers of Water Aid targeted its audience to accept the preferred reading?

