



Sixth Form Handbook
MEDIA STUDIES

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About the course

Welcome to Poole High School Media Department!

We hope that the subject & our staff can provide you with enough inspiration & motivation during your time here to be excited about studying the media & develop your understanding of the world around you, together with your practical skills.

The course is largely exam based, meaning that you will need a good understanding of media theory and concepts.

As teachers, we are your support, guidance & mentors. We are not the source of all knowledge, however, so we cannot answer everything. Be prepared to be told to find out yourself!

Finally, we would like everyone to enjoy this course. We will set you a wide range of coursework & homework in preparation for exams, but you must remember: the more you put in, the more you get out!

The media project may take weeks to complete and require many days, evenings and weekends to complete them.

This is not an easy course to take on – it will challenge your motivation & stamina. However, you will come out the other side a very different & developed person.

Be prepared for an exciting & challenging year ahead!

EXPECTATIONS

One of the secrets of success lies in your ability to organise both yourself and your work, and study effectively on your own. In this respect you will find that your work will fall into the following categories;

- **CREATIVE/PRACTICAL** production work
- **REVIEW** of notes taken in lessons
- **WRITE UPS** of practical work in terms of your production blog
- **READING** text books to support theoretical understanding
- **NOTE MAKING** from extra sources (books, web, periodicals)
- **WRITING** answers to the set essays (Two sides A4 min.)
- **REVISING** at the end of your set topic

Basic Reminders

1. Arrive on time for every session
2. Have a folder for each topic you are covering
3. Be prepared with a pens, pencils, ruler, rubber
4. Make notes in lesson from discussions & the whiteboard
5. Listen carefully & discuss sensibly
6. Have the highest respect for equipment and staff

How you will be assessed

GCE A LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Component 1: Media Products, Industries and Audiences

Written examination: 2 hours 15 minutes
35% of qualification

The examination assesses media language, representation, media industries, audiences and media contexts. It consists of two sections:

Section A: Analysing Media Language and Representation

This section assesses media language and representation in relation to **two** of the following media forms: advertising, marketing, music video or newspapers. There are **two** questions in this section:

- **one** question assessing media language in relation to an unseen audio-visual or print resource
- **one** extended response comparison question assessing representation in one set product and an unseen audio-visual or print resource in relation to media contexts.

Section B: Understanding Media Industries and Audiences

This section assesses **two** of the following media forms – advertising, marketing, film, newspapers, radio, video games - and media contexts.

It includes:

- **one** stepped question on media industries
- **one** stepped question on audiences.

Component 2: Media Forms and Products in Depth

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes
35% of qualification

The examination assesses media language, representation, media industries, audiences and media contexts. It consists of three sections:

Section A – Television in the Global Age

There will be **one** two-part question or **one** extended response question.

Section B – Magazines: Mainstream and Alternative Media

There will be **one** two-part question or **one** extended response question.

Section C – Media in the Online Age

There will be **one** two-part question or **one** extended response question.

Component 3: Cross-Media Production

Non exam assessment
30% of qualification

An **individual** cross-media production based on **two forms** in response to a **choice of briefs set by WJEC**, applying knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework and digital convergence.

Areas of Study (Year 12):

Advertising: Tide, WaterAid, Kiss of the Vampire.

Newspapers: The Mirror and The Times.

Video Games: Assassins Creed III: Liberation

Music Video: Formation by Beyoncé and Riptide by Valance.

Film Marketing: Black Panther, I Daniel Blake.

Radio: Late Night Women's Hour

Areas of Study (Year 13)

Magazines: Woman's Realm, Huck

Blogs and Websites: Zoella, Attitude.

Television: Life on Mars, The Bridge.

Course Reading

Reading

Main Course Textbook:

AS/A2 Media Studies: WJEC/ Eduqas Johnson/Bell, 2017

Reference Books:

Penguin Dictionary of Media Studies - Abercrombie/Longhurst, 2007

Stars - Dyer/McDonald, 1998*

Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction - Gauntlett, 2008*

Youth and Media - Ruddock, 2013*

Creative Explorations: New Approaches to Identity and Audience - Gauntlett, 2007

After the Death of Childhood: Growing Up in the Age of Electronic Media - Buckingham, 2000

Media Culture and Society - Hodkinson, 2010

Digital Generations: Children, Young People and New Media - Buckingham, 2006*

Youth, Identity and Digital Media - Buckingham, 2008

Folk Devils and Moral Panics - Cohen, 2011
Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain - Hall/Jefferson, 2006
Media Psychology - Brewer, 2011
Convergence Culture: where Old and New Media Collide - Jenkins, 2008
Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices - Hall/Evans/Nixon, 2013
Media Studies 2.0 - Gauntlett, 201

Useful websites

Youtube - <http://www.youtube.com>
IMDB - <http://www.imdb.com>
BBC iPlayer - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iPlayer>
University of Edinburgh Sociology Department - <http://www.sociology.ed.ac.uk/youth/>
Pete's Media Blog - <http://www.petesmediablog.blogspot.co.uk>
Media Knowall - www.mediaknowall.com
We Study Media - <http://westudymedia.wordpress.com/>
Theory.org - <http://www.theory.org.uk/>

Tasks before September - to learn the glossary

This glossary will contain terms and definitions that will help you throughout your A level studies:

Examination - A formally convened timed assessment of a module under the direct supervision of an appointed invigilator(s).

Coursework - This term covers work which a student is required or expected to undertake but does not form part of an examination as defined above.

Anchorage - how meaning is fixed, as in how a caption fixes the meaning of a picture

Audience – viewers, listeners and readers of a media text. A lot of media studies is concerned with how audience use texts and the effects a text may have on them. Also identified in demographic socio-economic categories.

Binary Opposites – the way opposites are used to create interest in media texts, such as good/bad, coward/hero, youth/age, black/white. By Barthes and Levi-Strauss who also noticed another important feature of these 'binary opposites': that one side of the binary pair is always seen by a particular society or culture as more valued over the other.

Code – a sign or convention through which the media communicates meaning to us because we have learned to read it. Technical codes – all to do with the way a text is technically constructed – camera angles, framing, typography, lighting etc. Visual codes – codes that are decoded on a mainly connotational level – things that draw on our experience and understanding of other media texts, this includes Iconography – which is concerned with the use of visual images and how they trigger the audience's expectations of a particular genre, such as a knife in slasher horror films.

Connotation – the secondary meaning that a sign carries in addition to its everyday meaning.

Consumer – purchaser, listener, viewer or reader of media products.

Context – time, place or mindset in which we consume media products.

Conventions – the widely recognised way of doing things in particular genre.

Denotation – the everyday or common sense meaning of a sign.

Diegetic Sound – Sound whose source is visible on the screen

Enigma – A question in a text that is not immediately answered and creates interest for the audience – a puzzle that the audience has to solve.

Genre – the type or category of a media text, according to its form, style and content.

Hypodermic Needle Theory – the idea that the media can ‘inject’ ideas and messages straight into the passive audience. This passive audience is immediately affected by these messages. Used in advertising and propaganda, led to moral panics about effect of violent video and computer games.

Ideology – A set of ideas or beliefs which are held to be acceptable by the creators of the media text, maybe in line with those of the dominant ruling social groups in society, or alternative ideologies such as feminist ideology.

Institutions – The organisations which produce and control media texts such as the BBC, AOL Time Warner, News International.

Intertextuality – the idea that within popular culture producers borrow other texts to create interest to the audience who like to share the ‘in’ joke. Used a lot in the Simpsons.

Media language – the means by which the media communicates to us and the forms and conventions by which it does so.

Mise en Scene – literally ‘what’s in the shot’ everything that appears on the screen in a single frame and how this helps the audience to decode what’s going on.

Mode of Address – The way a media product ‘speaks’ to its audience. In order to communicate, a producer of any text must make some assumptions about an intended audience; reflections of such assumptions may be discerned in the text (advertisements offer particularly clear examples of this).

Ownership – who produces and distributes the media texts – and whose interest it is.

Narrative - the storyline and structure of a media text. Narratives help to shape and explain all aspects of our lives from earliest infancy. They are part of the ways in which we make sense of the world and provide reassurance in the face of the dangers and contradictions of everyday experience. Narratives are structured within genres, which provide frameworks of expectation, predictability and outcome.

Non-Diegetic sound – Sound effects, music or narration which is added afterwards

Preferred Reading - the interpretation of a media product that was intended by the maker or which is dictated by the ideology of the society in which it is viewed. **Oppositional Reading** – an interpretation of a text by a reader whose social position puts them into direct conflict with its preferred reading. **Negotiated Reading** – the ‘compromise’ that is reached between the preferred reading offered by a text and the reader’s own assumptions and interpretations

Representation – The way in which the media ‘re-presents’ the world around us in the form of signs and codes for audiences to read.

SFX – special effects or devices to create visual illusions.

Sign – a word or image that is used to represent an object or idea.

Signifier/Signified – the ‘thing’ that conveys the meaning, and the meaning conveyed. E.G.a red rose is a signifier, the signified is love (or the Labour Party!)

Stereotype – representation of people or groups of people by a few characteristics e.g. hoodies, blondes

Target Audience - the intended audience for a media product. When producing a media text for mass consumption, identification of the target audience is essential so the media institutions can assess the likely response to the product and the investment risks involved.

Uses and Gratifications – ideas about how people use the media and what gratification they get from it. It assumes that members of the audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives.

Who can I contact for help?

Mr. C. Davidson c.davidson@poolehigh.poole.sch.uk