

A Level MEDIA STUDIES

Year 12 Handbook and Summer Tasks

Instructions:

- This booklet contains clear information about starting this A Level. Please read it carefully before starting in September.
- Please complete all of the tasks set in this booklet before beginning your A-Level Media course in September.
- Before joining the course officially, this book must be totally complete and handed in on your first day.
- Failure to complete this booklet will result in your being sent away from your first Media lesson.
- The booklet will cover the 18 Close Study Products (CSP's) you will cover over your 2 year course.
- Any questions/ problems, please email:



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SPECIFICATION

PAPER 1 WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Media One
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Section A will focus on Media Language and Media Representations. Questions in this section will test the following forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advertising and marketing• music video. <p>Section B will focus on Media Industries and Media Audiences. Questions in this section can test any two of the following forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• radio• newspapers• film (industries only).
<p>How it's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours• 84 marks• 35% of A-level
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of questions relating to an unseen source and Close Study Products.• Two essay questions (20 marks), one of which is an extended response question.

PAPER 2 WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Media Two
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Questions will focus on the in-depth media forms of television, magazines and online, social and participatory media/video games.</p>
<p>How it's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours• 84 marks• 35% of A-level
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One medium length unseen analysis question.• Three essay questions (25 marks), one of which is an extended response question and one of which is a synoptic question.

NON EXAM ASSESSMENT PRACTICAL TASK

Non-exam assessment: Creating a cross-media production

What's assessed

- Application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework.
- Ability to create media products.

How it's assessed

- A choice of one of six annually changing briefs, set by AQA.
- 60 marks
- 30% of A-level
- Assessed by teachers
- Moderated by AQA

Tasks

Students produce:

- a statement of intent
- a cross-media production made for an intended audience.

Course Content: Paper 1

<u>PERSONAL LEARNING CHECKLIST:</u> Paper 1		Unconfident	Need to Review	Confident
Advertising and Marketing Maybelline <i>That Boss Life part 1</i> Manny Guitierrez (online ad)	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
Advertising and Marketing Score hair cream print advert <i>Get what you always wanted</i> (1970's)	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
Music Videos <i>Letter to the Free-</i> Common ft Bilal	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
Music Videos <i>Ghost Town</i>	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
Radio <i>War of the Worlds</i> (1938)	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Radio <i>Radio 1's Life Hacks</i>	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Newspapers <i>The Daily Mail</i>	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Newspapers <i>The 'I'</i>	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Film Industry <i>Chicken</i> (Joe Stephenson, UK, 2015)	Media Industry			

Course Content: Paper 2

PERSONAL LEARNING CHECKLIST: Paper 2		Unconfident	Need to Review	Confident
Television Selection One:	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Television Selection Two:	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Magazines <i>Men's Health</i> magazine, Jan/Feb 2017	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Magazines <i>Oh Comely</i> (issue 35)	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Video Games <i>Tomb Raider Anniversary</i> (2007)	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Video Games <i>Sims Freeplay</i>	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			
Video Games <i>Metroid Prime 2 Echoes</i>	Media Language			
	Media Representations			
	Media Audiences			
	Media Industry			

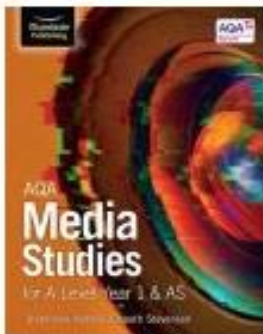
Expectations, Resources and Reading List

- You must attend every lesson and catch up on any work missed.
- Every part of the course/exam is on the media google sites. This is a major part of your own reading and revision which is done outside the lesson and will ensure you get the highest marks possible. Get to know it inside out!

Media.rodningvalley.net

- Buy the following books:

AQA Media Studies for A Level Year 1 & AS



Authors: Stephanie Hendry, Elspeth Stevenson
Publisher: Illuminate Publishing
ISBN-13: 978-1-911208-03-7
Price: £24.50
Publication date: October 2017

 [Look inside \(3.4 MB\)](#) 

AQA Media Studies for A Level Year 2



Authors: Stephanie Hendry, Elspeth Stevenson
Publisher: Illuminate Publishing
ISBN-13: 978-1-911208-09-9
Price: £24.50
Publication date: Spring 2018

A LEVEL MEDIA SUMMER CHALLENGE

Use the following website and your own research to help you answer the following questions:

<https://sites.google.com/a/rodingvalley.net/media/c-s-p-a-level-the-killing>

In your own words, explain what the following key Media terms mean:

Mise en Scene: _____

Genre: _____

Enigma Code: _____

Synergy: _____

Social context: _____

Cultural context: _____

Corruption: _____

Immigration: _____

Heavy viewers: _____

Light viewers: _____

Positive mainstreaming: _____

Resonance: _____

First Order Effects: _____

Second Order Effects: _____

Mean World: _____

A LEVEL MEDIA SUMMER CHALLENGE



Media texts and Media language

It's easy to turn on the TV, Radio or Internet and take in the images and sounds we are presented with. But a lot of work has gone into the production of these programmes, behind the scenes the production team have worked hard to present us with what they want to see.

When you start to analyse these 'products', you can tell what choices have been made for the audience. In media when we refer to these products we call them **media texts**. We usually associate the word 'text' with something that is printed or written. In Media Studies, however, the word 'text' is used to describe any media product such as television programmes, photographs, films either on DVD/Blu-Ray or in the cinema, newspaper articles, radio programmes, advertisements, video games or web pages. This is where we use **media language** as a **tool to analyse** media products.

Like lots of things, Media has jargon, which has special meanings. You need to be able to read a media text using **media language**. Try to remember that media texts have been purposely constructed to create certain responses in the audience and transmit certain messages – when looking at media texts remember “Nothing is accidental; everything is there for a reason”.

Semiotics - signs and codes

The word 'semiotics' comes from the Greek word *semeion* meaning 'sign'. Semiotics, or 'semiology', is the study of signs and **meanings**. For the purposes of such study a sign is any physical object with a meaning. It has a particular interest to media studies when it comes to analysis of print and film.

The study of signs and codes, semiology, is the starting point for studying individual texts and making comparisons between them. What semiotics allows us to do is to look at some of the underlying structures that determine how media texts are constructed. It allows us to explore sign systems that are used within texts and to discover how these make **meanings for the audience**. For students of media, semiotic analysis is a useful tool in the analysis of texts as it helps to reveal the underlying meanings that are 'suspended' within a text. You can then take this analysis further and consider the ideologies, or belief systems, that underpin texts and their construction.

It is important to be aware that most sign systems do not necessarily have one particular 'fixed' meaning. Part of the meaning of the sign is dependent upon the social and cultural background of the 'reader' of the particular sign system.

As part of the process of semiotic analysis, we the audience are called 'readers' because it suggests a greater degree of creativity and involvement in the construction of the text's meaning. 'Reading' is something we learn to do and is influenced to a large extent by our social and cultural background. As the reader of a text, we will bring something of our own cultural and personal experiences to a text. For example, a person who has had bad experiences at the hands of the police will read an episode of a police drama in a very different way to a person who has had positive experiences in dealing with them.

It can be argued media texts therefore can be **polysemic** = more than one meaning, open to interpretation.

Signs

Saussure was a structuralist and his work developed many of the ideas associated with semiotics. According to this view, the place of a sign within the overall system gives meaning. Others such as Pierce believe that the creation of meaning from signs is a continual process and is subject to change. From this perspective humans *interpret* signs and act accordingly.

For Saussure signs have two parts:

1. **signifier** - the actual image, physical appearance or sound
2. **signified** - the idea or ideas to which the sign refers.

signifier + signified = sign

The classic example of a sign would be that of a **red rose**:



Signifier = a red rose

Signified = Love, romance, passion

Roland Barthes developed this theory to include the interaction of humans with signs. He proposed two levels of 'reading' signs: **Denotation and connotation**

To interpret meanings you need to learn the skills of denotation and connotation.

Denotation

This is the common sense meaning of the text; describing accurately what is there and the detail that makes up the language of the text.

Connotation

What meanings the text may carry about the ways we perceive the contemporary world.

Connotation is important; it is essentially the human response to the text. This may vary based on people's experiences, religion, age, gender and culture etc. For example a colour may have many possible connotations (green may be associated with envy, nature, fertility or eco-friendliness).

The significance of the text's connotations is important, why have they used particular colours, settings, costumes, poses etc. What meanings are they trying to produce for the audience?

What connotations do you think these elements would signify in a film?

DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
A dark room	
High pitched screeching music	
Shadows	
Rain	
Sunshine	
An FBI badge	
A red dress	
Dying flowers in a vase	
A man carrying a red rose	

Task 1: Using what you have learnt pick any film poster.

1. Annotate the Signs and Signified or Denotations and Connotations.
2. Write an analysis of the poster using this information. How does it convey meaning to the audience? What meanings are there? Would these change depending on someone's background? If so how?

Task 2:

Design and make a film poster using clear signs and signified.

- It can be any genre.
- Try and use original images, if you can.
- It could be the story of your life!
- You can use any software programme.

Please hand to your Media Studies Teacher in your first week of A levels. We look forward to seeing you!

