Media Studies Year 11

Therapy and Testing

Key Focus: Media Language
Area of Understanding

To reach the top grades, students need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how media products reflect the social, cultural, historical and political contexts in which they are produced.

Q. What does this mean?
Key Terminology

Can you write a definition of each of these media terms?

• Symbolic code
• Technical code
• Verbal (and non-verbal) code
• Sign
• Symbol
• Icon
• Anchorage
• Enigma
• Genre
• Narrative

To test your understanding can you put each of these into a sentence when discussing any of your set texts for the exam?
Portraying Reality

Media texts create their own diegetic worlds, this in most cases reflects the real world in which the audience live. It is important to understand how media producers use media language to portray reality within their texts.

Task: Choose three media texts across different mediums and identify how they have constructed a world that reflects the real world. You should look at how they have constructed the mise-en-scene and how this is encoded with symbolic codes.
Constructing Ideologies

Within the world of the media text there will be ideologies present, these will be communicated through the representations within the text. In order to reach the top levels you need to show that you understand how media language constructs messages and values which are communicated to an audience.

Q. Why do producers use stereotypes within their texts?

Q. Can you think of any media texts that challenge or subvert stereotypes through their use of media language? What is the effect of this?

Q. What is the impact of repeated representations and messages within the media?
Codes and Conventions

Codes and conventions are the building blocks of genre within media studies. The repeated use of these are easily identifiable by an audience and useful to producers when attracting an audience.

Task: Using the film marketing products you have studied for your exams, identify how genre is communicated through the use of media language. You need to think about the codes and conventions encoded in the text, alongside the technical and symbolic codes.
## Reviewing your Learning

I understand how media language is used to portray aspects of reality.
I understand how media language is used to construct opinions and ideologies.
I understand how media language is used to create representations that convey messages and values.
I understand how media language is used to create codes and conventions within media texts that communicate meanings.
Creating Narrative

A key convention of a media text is that it constructs a narrative of some sort.

Q. Can you explain Todorov’s narrative structure? Can you think of any recent media texts that you have consumed that follow this?

Q. Why do you think producers often choose to follow this structure?

Q. Referring to any of your audio-visual set texts, explain how they conform to this structure. Have they adapted it to suit a modern audience? Explain how this might illustrate the needs of an audience at this period in time.
Narrative Expectations

When you explore narrative within media texts, you will see that many modern media texts play with *traditional conventions* around narrative and attempt to *engage* an audience through *subverting* or *challenging* their expectations.

*Task:* Look at one of your computer game set texts and explore whether they include Propp’s traditional character roles. Can you identify any characters that do not fall neatly into Propp’s list? How have the producers used narrative expectations to engage the audience with the product?
Reviewing your Learning

I understand narrative theories, including Propp's character roles and Todorov's narrative structure.

I understand narrative development including:

- exposition
- disruption
- complication
- climax
- resolution.
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