



St Paul's Catholic School

**AQA A Level Media Studies
Transition Booklet**



Name: _____

“Whoever controls the media controls the mind” – Jim Morrison

Dear prospective Media students,

Welcome to A-Level Media Studies!

Don't be alarmed that you have never studied Media before; all new concepts will be introduced to you and you'll be guided through the foundations on which the course is built.

KS5 Media Studies is underpinned by four **KEY CONCEPTS**, these are:

- Media Language
- Media Representation
- Media Audience
- Media Industries

You will be expected to read around each of the topics you study and form your own opinions and views on these. It is not enough to regurgitate what your teacher tells you in your lessons; you will need to form your own views and opinions alongside these.

What makes a successful student at A-Level?

The one thing that the majority of students who achieve highly at the end of the course have in common is that they're independent learners who enjoy consuming varied media texts and have a desire to expand their own knowledge and understanding of the topics covered in class.

Why study Media Studies?

- Comprehensive and integrated coverage of media theory and practise
- Focus on new technologies.
- Covers audiences as both producers and consumers of media texts
- Opportunities for you to investigate what interests you.
- Choice of cross-media studies.
- Emphasis on contemporary issues and debates
- Opportunities for creativity.

- You'll be working with others and independently to advance your skills in becoming a self-sufficient learner in preparation for further study at University or other career avenues.
- Develop a range of transferable skills.
- Extra-curricular opportunities to consolidate your understanding of the Media and see how it is used in practice.

Recommended Reading:

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- Media Theory for A Level: The Essential Revision Guide by Mark Dixon.

[Media Theory for A Level: The Essential Revision Guide : Dixon, Mark: Amazon.co.uk: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1471894414)

Media Products Studied in Year 12:

Type of Media	Product	Areas of Media
Advertisements	Score Hair Cream	Media Language Media Representation
	Sephora Black Beauty is Beauty	Media Language Media Representation
Music Videos	Ghost Town	Media Language Media Representation
	Old Town Road	Media Language Media Representation
Radio	War of the Worlds	Media Audiences Media Industries
	Newsbeat	Media Audiences Media Industries
Newspapers	The Guardian	Media Audiences Media Industries
	The Daily Mail	Media Audiences Media Industries

Media Products Studied in Year 13:

Type of Media	Product	Areas of Media
Television	Capital	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
	Deutschland 83	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
Online	The Voice	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
	Taylor Swift's social media presence	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
Gaming	Horizon West	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
	SIMS Freeplay	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
Magazines	The Gentlewoman	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries
	GQ	Media Language Media Representation Media Audiences Media Industries

To get ahead with this, start making notes on some of the media products below.

My Notes:

Old Town Road Music Video – Lil Nas X

Storyline:

Genre:

Release date:

Produced by:

Interesting facts:

The Daily Mail:

Types of Stories:

Political stance:

Typical Layout:

Interesting facts:

Task 1: Media Theory

Media Studies is a theoretical course. You will learn about many media theories across the four areas of media study and apply them to the close study products that have been already listed in this booklet.

Find out two things about each of the theories listed below by logging onto Massolit. Follow the steps below:

1. Visit: [MASSOLIT – Short video lectures from the world's best academics](#)

Log in using single sign on

2. Log in using Single Sign on by searching our school's name:

Start typing the name of your institution

St Paul's

St Paul's Catholic School, Leicester

3. Search the theory in the search bar at the top.

Media Language Theories	Media Representation Theory
Semiotics (Roland Barthes)	Gender Performativity (Judith Butler)
Narratology (Todorov)	Intersectionality (bell hooks)

Media Industry Theories	Media Audience Theories
Power and Media Industries (Curran and Seaton)	Fandom (Jenkins)

Task 2: Media Language

Media language refers to how media products communicate with an audience. This is mainly done through the use of visual language. You will find that media texts communicate meaning through the use of signs and symbols. Creators of media products encode messages and meanings within their products through media language, the audience then decode their messages and respond to them in different ways.

It can include:

- Camera Angles
- Editing
- Sound
- Mise-en-scene (what is in the frame)
- Intertextuality (referring to another media product within their own work)

Look at this picture from a print advertisement for Tide washing detergent. What meanings does this advert portray to a viewer (about women? Cleanliness? Etc). Annotate the image with ideas of what the signs are and what they could mean.

No wonder you women buy more **TIDE** than any other washday product!

TIDE'S GOT WHAT WOMEN WANT!



NO SOAP—NO OTHER "SUDS"—NO OTHER WASHING PRODUCT KNOWN—WILL GET YOUR WASH AS **CLEAN AS TIDE!**



ONLY TIDE DOES ALL THREE:

- 1. World's CLEANEST wash!**
Yes, Tide will get your wash cleaner than any other washing product! (Tide, unlike soap, removes both dirt and soap film.) No wonder more Tide goes into American homes than any other washday product!
- 2. World's WHITEST wash!**
It's a miracle! In hardest water, Tide will get your shirts, sheets, towels whiter—yes, whiter—than any soap or any other washing product known!
- 3. Actually BRIGHTENS colors!**
Trust all your washable colors to Tide. With all its terrific cleaning power, Tide is truly safe . . . and actually brightens soap-dulled colors.



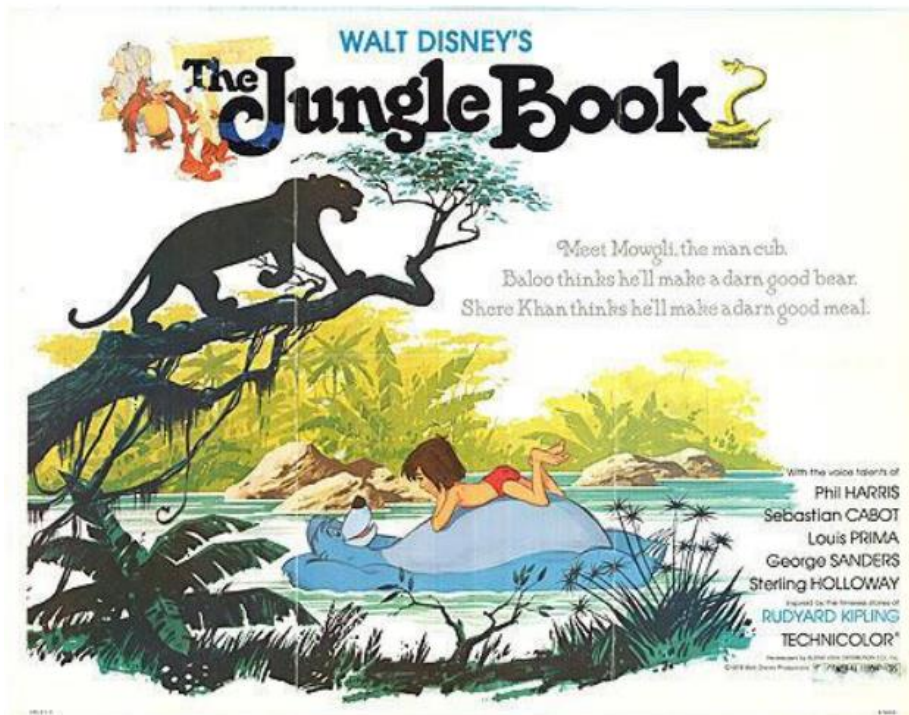
REMEMBER!

TIDE GETS CLOTHES CLEANER THAN ANY OTHER WASHDAY PRODUCT YOU CAN BUY!



Task 3: More Media Language

Look at the two posters below, both advertising 'The Jungle Book' film. One is historic (from 1967) and the other from 2016. Write at least 10 bullet points, explaining the similarities and differences between both posters for the films considering the images seen, audience they are aimed at, language used and impact they have had on you.



1967 Film



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Task 4: Media Audiences

Every media product targets a specific audience. Each media product producer has a target audience in mind when creating the product. What would be the point of any media text if there was no audience to consume it? Within Media Studies 'audience' refers to how different forms of media target, reach and address audiences. We also explore how to group people into audiences and how these groups respond differently to different media texts.

For each of the following trailers, identify the target audience and give examples of how they have appealed to this target audience.

1. **Gears of War**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccWrbGEFgl8>

Target audience:

Examples of how they appeal to this group:

2. **Farmville**

[FarmVille 2: Country Escape - Download Now \(youtube.com\)](#)

Target audience:

Examples of how they appeal to this group:

3. **World of Warcraft**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSjr3dXZfcg>

Target audience:

Examples of how they appeal to this group:

Task 5: Media Representations

Representation refers to how the media portrays events, issues, individuals and social groups. This covers which different groups, individuals and/or events are presented or shown on the product. The media re-presents the world. Many theorists such as Stuart Hall and David Gauntlett have explored the notion that the media do not actually reflect the world, but they shape it through their representations.

One area of the study of representations are stereotypes. Stereotypes are where a group is reduced down to just a few characteristics, usually negative ones, and then this comes to represent the whole of that group. A theorist called Propps, believed all stories had familiar patterns in them in regards to character. He called his theory Spheres of Action. Look at the list of character roles/stereotypes he says are common across stories. Find out what each character does in a narrative and see whether you can apply it to a TV episode of your choosing.

Character	Their role	Example from my TV episode
Hero		
Villain		
Donor		
Helper		

Prize		
Dispatcher		
False hero		

Task 6: Media Industry

Media industries refer to the business aspect of the media. As media students you will be exploring how different media industries in different countries produce, distribute and market their products. You will consider ownership, regulation and technological change on the industry. Mainstream media products are often produced by big global conglomerates that have a large amount of power within the industry.

When you watch a TV Drama made in each continent of the world, shade that area of the map. Write the name of the TV Drama in the continent and when it was made/aired. To add more detail, add the countries where the TV Dramas are made on the following page or on a separate piece of paper. You could do some more research into each of the countries to find out about what each country is like during that era and understand how this is shown in the programme and its representations.



TV Drama examples

Mr Robot
 Homeland
 The Killing
 Deutschland 83
 Deutschland 86
 Borgen
 House of Cards
 Stranger Things

Orange is the new black
 Game of Thrones
 Trapped
 Sherlock
 Downton Abbey
 Vikings
 The Marvellous Mrs Maisel

Band of Brothers
 Taboo
 24
 The West Wing
 The Good Wife
 Arrow
 Merlin

Sons of Anarchy
 Call the Midwife
 The Crown
 Mad Men
 13 Reasons Why
 Prison Break
 The Americans

Task 6: Media Terminology

As you have never studied media before in an academic context, you will need to develop your range of subject specific vocabulary. Below is a list of key terms to get you started. Research what each term means and make notes in the spaces provided.

Active audience	
Anchorage	
Artificial scarcity	

Audience positioning	
Audio codes	
Autonomy	
Binary Oppositions	
Circulation	
Conglomerate	
Connotation	
Conventions	
Convergence (technological)	
Cross media ownership	
Denotation	
Diaspora	
Distribution	
Dominant Ideology	
Equilibrium	
Fandom	
Franchise	
Horizontal Integration	
Ideology	
Intertextuality	
Mediation	
Participatory	
Passive audience	
Regulation	
Subsidiary	
Tokenism	
Vertical Integration	