



ST MICHAEL'S  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Welcome  
to Media Studies  
A Level*



ACHIEVING IN FAITH, WITH LOVE, AS A COMMUNITY

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:

### Recommended reading:

- 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/1471889410)

Media Products studied:

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

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

## 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:

| 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<br>(Curran and Seaton) | Fandom (Jenkins)        |

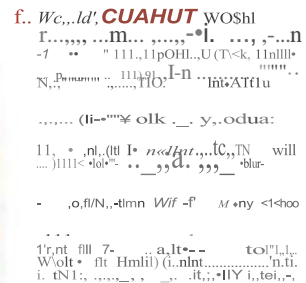
## Task 2: Media Language

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)

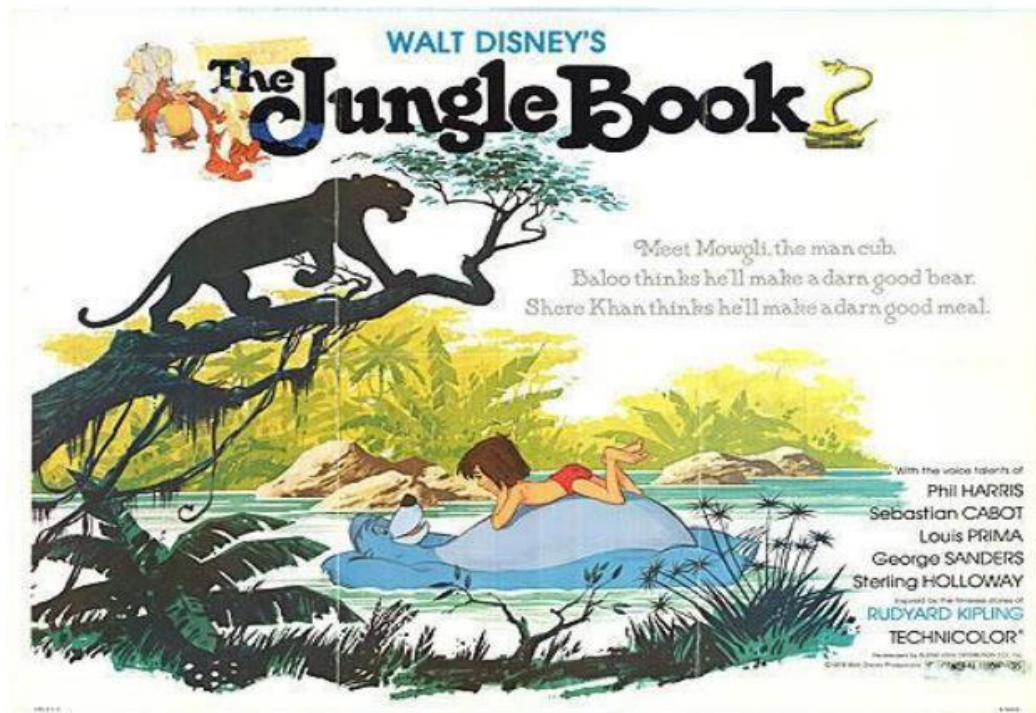
Cleanliness? Etc). Annotate the image with ideas of what the signs are and what they could mean.



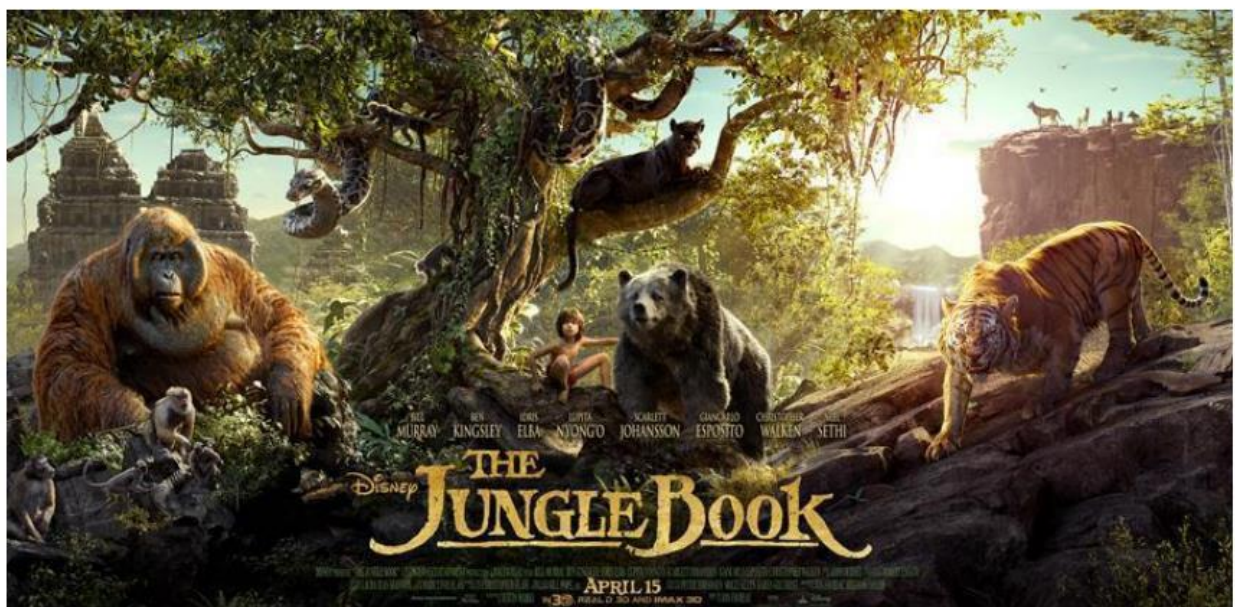


## Task 3: More Media Language

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



2016 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.

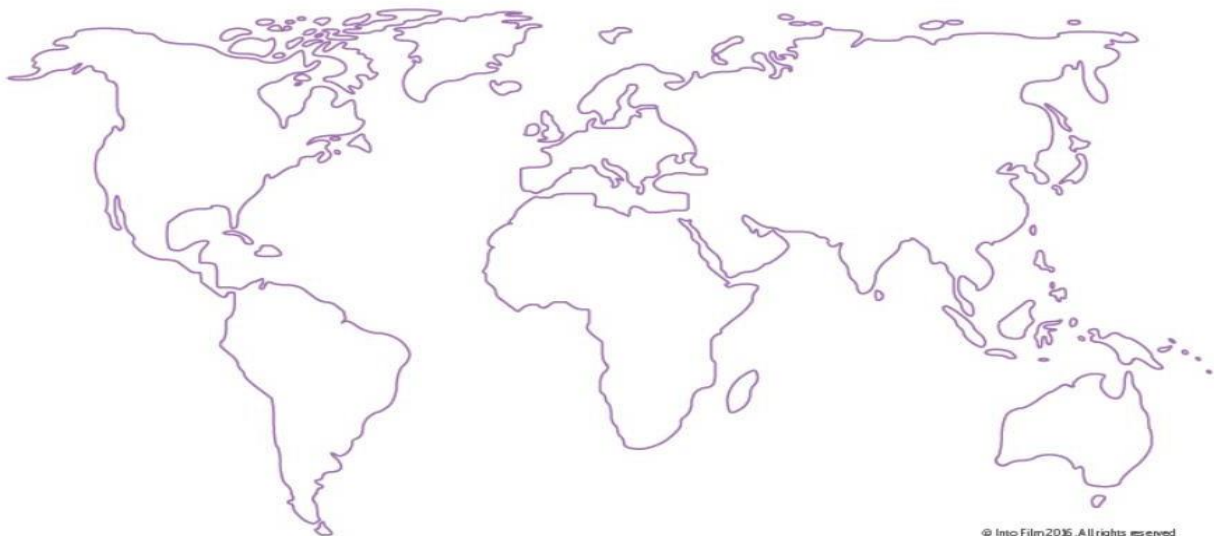
One area of the study of representations are stereotypes. Stereotypes are where a group is reduced down to just a few characteristics, usually negative ones, and then this comes to represent the whole of that group. A theorist called Propps, believed all stories had familiar patterns in them in regards 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 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.

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

