



Wath Sixth Form Subject Preparation Pack

MEDIA STUDIES

World-class learning

World-class learning every lesson, every day

The highest expectations

Everyone can be successful; always set and expects the highest standards

No excuses

Create solutions not excuses; make positive thinking a habit

Growth mindset

Believe you can improve; work hard and value feedback

Never give up

Resilience is essential; be relentless in the pursuit of excellence

Everyone is valued

Diversity is celebrated; see the best in everyone

A Level Media Studies Transition Pack

Contents

- What is Media Studies?
- Why should I study Media Studies?
- What careers could A Level Media Studies lead to?
- What will I study?
- How will I be assessed?
- Recommended resources
- Additional resources
- Meet the staff
- Introductory activities

What is Media Studies?

Media Studies is the academic study of all forms of media. In this A Level, we study nine different media forms:

- Television
- Film
- Music videos
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Radio
- Videogames
- Online media
- Advertising and marketing

You will critically study these media forms through the close analysis of set products (some of which will be familiar and others which will be older or from different cultures). As we do so, we will consider:

- Media language – the ways in which media products create meaning
- Representations – how different groups of people (classified by gender, age ethnicity etc.) as well as issues and events are portrayed by the media
- Industries – the companies behind the media and how they operate
- Audiences – how audiences are targeted by the media and how they respond to media products

This is an academic course, though there is also a practical element where you make your own media products.

Why should I study Media Studies?

The media is something you already engage with every single day and is becoming more and more important to everyday life, so understanding how it works is a very desirable skill. The course will enhance your analytical skills and ability to argue a point of view, which is vital to almost all future education and careers. You will also acquire some practical skills, which are becoming more and more important in many careers.

It is worth stressing that you **do not** need to have studied media before to take the A Level.

What careers could Media Studies lead to?

Of course, Media Studies is excellent preparation for any role in the media industry itself, which is rapidly growing. Furthermore, because of the broad range of analytical and creative skills it develops, Media Studies is fantastic preparation for many careers, including the likes of business, marketing, design, journalism and public relations.

What will I study?

At Wath Academy, we follow the WJEC Eduqas A Level Media Studies specification. It covers a breadth of knowledge split across two exam papers and one portfolio of non-exam assessment (coursework).

Component 1: Media Products, Industries and Audiences

This unit focuses on breadth, by studying advertising/marketing, music videos, newspapers, film, radio and videogames

Analysing Media Language

How do media products create meaning? You will find out how by looking at the 'language' of the media, such as camera shots, layout, editing, sound, colour, typography etc.

Analysing Representations

The media does not represent the world exactly as it is. Here, we look at how the media represents the likes of different people, events and issues.

Understanding Industries

The business behind the media, including ownership, funding and regulation

Understanding Audiences

How different media products find and target their audiences – and how they respond

Component 2: Media Forms and Products in Depth

This unit focuses on depth, by studying three media forms in greater detail: television, magazines and online media

Television in the Global Age

How is the TV industry adapting to the 21st century? By examining the Channel 4 drama *Humans* and French drama *The Returned*, we find out.

Magazines: Mainstream and Alternative Media

Magazines have long been culturally relevant, as you will see when studying a copy of *Vogue* from 1965. Contrasting this, we will examine how *The Big Issue* is breaking new ground today.

Media in the Online Age

A journey through the rise of online media, which has made mainstream stars out of the likes of Zoe Sugg, yet also provided a home for more alternative products, like the *Attitude* website.

Component 3: Cross-Media Production (Non-Exam Assessment)

In this unit, you create your own media products, based around television, magazines, film marketing or music marketing.

Statement of Aims and Intentions

Using an exam board-set brief, you will research your chosen industry and genre, before planning your media product.

Main Media Product

Now it's time to make your media product, such as a TV sequence, magazine pages, film posters or music sleeve.

Linked Media Product

Your second media product will be linked to the first, such as a website or online video to go with your first product.

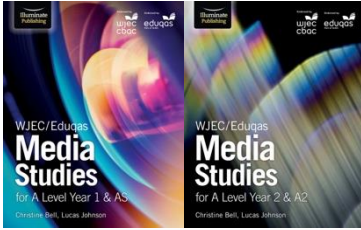
When completing your practical work, you will have plenty of support and use industry-standard Adobe software, so don't worry if you've never done this before!

The course is assessed by 70% exam and 30% non-exam assessment. Component 1 is assessed by a 2¼ hour exam, worth 35% of your grade. Component 2 is assessed by a 2½ exam, also worth 35% of your grade. Both exams are taken at the end of Year 13. The non-exam assessment, where you produce your own media products, is completed at the end of Year 12 and beginning of Year 13.

To help prepare for the final exams, you will take practice assessments throughout the two years, which will reflect the full spectrum of skill and question styles assessed by the exam board.

Recommended resources

WJEC/Eduqas Media Studies for A Level Year 1/Year 2 by Christine Bell and Lucas Johnson (Illuminate Publishing)



These two textbooks, endorsed by the exam board, cover all areas of the course and have a good glossary. However, they are expensive and we do have copies in school, so you may prefer to focus on the free websites below.

Essential Media Theory (essentialmediatheory.com)

- A student-friendly website that takes the theories we study in Media Studies and explains them clearly, applying them to products.

The Media Insider (youtube.com/channel/UCGXfqzVEZr0XaZLWG3_HniA)

- A YouTube channel explaining lots of the concepts of Media Studies.

Additional resources

The following resources may or may not link directly to the specification but are useful in developing your wider understanding of key theories and concepts.

Reading

MediaMagazine (englishandmedia.co.uk/media-magazine)

- A free copy of the magazine is available to download

DigitalSpy (digitalspy.com)

- Lots of media news and views

MediaGuardian (theguardian.com/uk/media)

- More industry-based media news

Films

Black Panther

I, Daniel Blake

- The marketing for both these films is studied during the course

Meet the staff



Mr Bishop Head of Media Studies

I have always been fascinated by the media, as it's such a large part of our everyday lives – yet not enough people stop to analyse it critically.

I established the Department of Media Studies at Wath in 2014 and it has been a joy to watch the A Level grow and go from strength to strength. As well as teaching Media Studies, I also teach English.

I love analysing, so really enjoy helping students acquire the skills to deconstruct media products themselves. One of the great things about Media Studies is that your own interpretation is important, so I really enjoy the debates in lessons. I also enjoy how fresh and new media is – it is constantly evolving and that means the lessons can be so much more relevant and enjoyable, with much of the content being very recent. Best of all, students seem to get a lot out of the course and are very successful at it.

Introductory activities

Pepsi Advertising and Marketing Analysis

On the next three pages are three print advertisements for Pepsi. You may wish to annotate them before you attempt to answer these questions.

- 1) Look at the first advertisement, promoting the 'skinny can'. How is the **media language** (the way the advert is put together) making this seem like a desirable product? You could think about things like the colour scheme, the choice of model, her dress code, the camera shot/angle, the layout of the advert, the slogan and the font used.
- 2) Who is the **target audience** for this advert? Try to be specific. How can you tell?
- 3) What is your **response** to the advert? Is your reading of it preferred (where you agree with what the media producers did), oppositional (where you don't) or negotiated (a combination of the two)?
- 4) Now look at the vintage Pepsi advert. Think about the **historical context** of the advert. What impression of the world in the past does it give you?
- 5) Compare how the women are **represented** in the vintage and contemporary adverts? In other words, what are the adverts saying women are like or should be like? Are there any similarities or differences between the adverts? Think about the text on the adverts as well as the images.
- 6) Now look at the contemporary Pepsi Max advert. This advert is aimed at a different **target audience**. How has this been achieved through the **media language**?
- 7) Lionel Messi, the model in the advert, is a successful footballer. What does this say about the **marketing industry**? Why have the producers decided to use someone famous?
- 8) Stuart Hall says that **stereotypes** tend to occur when the people being represented do not have much power. Do these advertisements support Hall's theory? Why?

No Time to Die Trailer

Watch the trailer for the next James Bond film, No Time to Die, at [youtube.com/watch?v=BlhNsAtPbPI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlhNsAtPbPI).

- 1) How does the **media language** build hype for the film? Think about the camera shots used, the background music and sound effects, the editing, the narrative of the trailer etc.
- 2) Analyse the **representations** within the trailer. You may wish to think about gender, age and ethnicity in particular. Make sure you give lots of evidence.
- 3) From an **industry** perspective, how can you tell this a big budget, mainstream blockbuster film? Refer to evidence from the trailer to support your view.
- 4) Expensive films like this need to attract a broad audience. How many **different audiences** can you identify being targeted (one could be fans of James Bond franchise, another could be middle-aged men, for example).

Your Own Analysis

Feel free to choose a media product of your own and analyse it thinking about similar questions to those above.

A contemporary Pepsi advertisement

facebook.com/dietpepsi

Straw designed by Jonathan Adler

the new skinny can™



DIET PEPSI, the Pepsi Globe and SKINNY CAN are trademarks of PepsiCo, Inc.

Pepsi-Cola
refreshes

without filling

THE MODERN WOMAN owes a lot to today's good sense in diet. She eats light, drinks light, and keeps her youthful figure longer. She looks better, feels better. Men like her better. And so does her insurance company.

For her, today's Pepsi-Cola is refreshment made to order. For Pepsi has kept in step with sensible changes in modern taste.

Dry, never too sweet, reduced in calories, it goes with all the wholesome ways of living that help make her what she is.

Enjoy Pepsi-Cola whenever you want refreshment—in the familiar economy bottle that serves two people, or the smaller, single-drink size, just right for one.

It's the modern, the *light* refreshment—refreshes without filling. That's why today Pepsi-Cola is more popular than ever.



Pepsi-Cola
*The Light
Refreshment*

A contemporary Pepsi Max advertisement

