



Media Studies A-Level at Tupton Hall

Hello,

I am pleased you are considering taking Media Studies at A-level. You may not be entirely sure what Media Studies is about so hopefully this introduction and the tasks attached will give you a better picture.

What is it?

Media is an extremely wide-ranging subject as it covers everything from TV dramas to Newspapers; Social Media to Sports broadcasting; Music videos to Radio; Advertising to Gaming; Film to Fan-fiction...we cover many of these topics but not all!

Media exists in the present. A media textbook dates from the day it was made as it is an ever-evolving subject. Change is rapid and few things stay the same. At the moment, during our study of **Stranger Things**, we also study how **Netflix** became the huge platform it is today. However, it is equally likely that by 2030 we could be studying its downfall!

In **Media**, whatever we are studying, **we investigate** the following:

Media Industries – Who makes it? Why does that matter? How might that impact upon what is made and who gets to make them? How is this changing? (For this, you only have to look at the fact that YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok and Netflix have all been created in your lifetime and have completely changed what people do, the language we use ('binge-watching'? 'My Story', 'YouTuber') and how media operates.

Media Language – how the media product communicates with the audience? Watch the opening scene of the first ever episode of TV drama 'Killing Eve'. Nothing is said yet we get a sense of the characters, the genre and the style and feel of the series. This is done through camera shots, angles and movements; sound; editing and the location, colours, costume etc (mise-en-scene). Every media product from adverts to TV news has its own 'media language'. The better we can understand this; the better we are at the next key area.

Media Representations – how the media constructs a representation of a person, place, time or event and the impact of that on our views and knowledge. Think about what you know about different parts of the UK or the world. What do you think of them? Unless you have direct and in-depth personal experience then most likely you have got this from the media products you have been exposed to.

Media Audiences – who is a media product made for? How do we know? What is their age? Their gender? Their values, attitudes and beliefs? Nothing is made for everyone! BBC Radio 4 and the

makers of Netflix's 'Sex Education' series are aiming their content at different age groups with perhaps different interests and ideas.

Why study Media?

1. **It's fun!** Making your own media products – you will make TV adverts, music videos and band websites – is an experience that will stay with you long after you finish school. It's fun yet challenging but the feeling you will get seeing your own creations get better and becoming better at using cameras and editing software is perhaps the main thing students remember about their time studying Media in 6th form. You can see many of the previous students media productions on our YouTube page [but here's a trailer](#) of some of their productions – the trailer was created by one of our ex-students.
2. **Key Skills:** Our students have used these skills to work in the film industry; create websites and manage the social media for their employers; work in sports broadcasting and journalism and study film production or sound design at university
3. **It's important.** We have never had so much stuff to distract us – whether it's binge-watching, scrolling or gaming. We have more information at our finger-tips than ever before yet misinformation, fake news and conspiracy theories spread faster than ever before too. We see ourselves, our lives and our issues represented in the media and we want to play our part in constructing representations of ourselves. If not, why do we post on social media or stick a filter on a photo? We are making representations.

You have all been born into the digital age and have been using these life-changing tools by the time you could crawl or walk. You will have all heard the debates about whether these are all a good thing or a bad thing: the truth is probably somewhere in between. If you become more 'media literate' you get better at understanding the ways in which issues, people or places are represented to you. You understand the tricks media producers use to create meanings and become more aware of how you use them yourself. It's a set of skills to indulge in the things you love doing but it is also a set of skills for life.

At Tupton Hall School we have a long history of superb Media students achieving the highest results. What makes that even more impressive is, perhaps like yourself, most of our students start the subject at A-level – the progress over 2 years is huge!

If you want to know any more, please feel free to get in touch with me. I look forward to seeing you in the new school year.

Mr Welch c.welch@tuptonhall.org.uk



TV DRAMA CASE STUDY – Summer Work

Y11-12 transition - TASK ONE

Complete one or two out of the first two tasks and complete the other 3

What is it?

You will need to complete a case study of a **TV Drama** of **your choice**. It can be UK, US, Swedish...a long-running series, a short series or a serial (short-run 3 episodes). How you complete it is up to you but it needs to be emailed to welchch@tuptonhall.derbyshire.sch.uk before the first week of the new school year or if completed on paper, handed in to your media studies teacher in the first week.

Things you need to include (for guidance – if you are working on Powerpoint then there should be a slide for each section)

1. Information about the drama series

- Who made it and screened it? (production company/TV channel)
- Who were the main actors, director, producer, writer etc?
- What were the ratings? What was the critical response (awards, reviews, how did people respond to it?)
- What were the audience figures/ratings? How many series/episodes were made? How long each episode? Budget? When was it screened (time of the day)? What age group is it aimed at? Why?
- What genre is it and what genre characteristics does it have? For example, if it is a medical drama, what storylines does it have which you would expect?

2. Closely analyse one episode from the series

- What camera shots are used? Do you notice anything about the editing techniques – are there repeated motifs or techniques?
- What are the themes or morals to the story? (If there are any)
- How does it fit into the overall narrative of the drama?
- How are the following represented: different genders, age groups, ethnic groups, sexuality?

3. Find out how the series was promoted and consumed.

- Marketing campaign before its release
- Formats and channels it is available on
- Use of websites, social media, apps etc

4. Finally, one slide about why you like it and why people should watch it.

CHOICE TWO: CREATIVE TASK

CREATE A TV/YouTube ADVERT THAT LASTS NO LONGER THAN 15 SECONDS.

IT CAN BE ON ANYTHING YOU LIKE!

SOME SUGGESTIONS:

- AN ADVERT FOR A FOOD PRODUCT. PERHAPS A DIFFICULT ONE TO SELL SUCH AS LIQUID CHEESE OR CHEESEY PEAS
- AN ADVERT FOR AN ONLINE SERVICE OR BUSINESS
- AN ADVERT FOR A HOUSEHOLD OBJECT or PRODUCT

Make it as strange or humorous as you like – real adverts do!

Unless you have your own camera use the camera on your phone. To edit it you can download and use any of these free or cheap apps or pieces of software.

APPS

- Filmora
- iMovie
- Capcut
- Adobe Rush Premiere

SOFTWARE*

- Lightworks
- DaVinci Resolve
- VSDC Video Editor
- Shotcut
- Videopad



*Check the operating requirements before doing this as it may not work to quickly on all laptops/devices

For this advert I would like you to use a range of techniques including:

- **Close ups**
- **Cutaways**
- **Transitions**
- **Mid-shots**
- **Sound/dialogue (voiceover if possible)**
- **Mise-en-scene (think about what you place in the frame)**

You will need to export this video and either email it to

c.welch@tuptonhall.org.uk

Or bring it to show me in the first week.

TASK 3: MY MEDIA...

Fill in the sheet below about your media use. Speak to other members of your family such as parents and grandparents – are they different? What are the main differences?

DEVICES I USE AND WHAT I USE THEM FOR...
(Hardware & software, convergence)



MUSIC I LIKE AND HOW I LISTEN TO IT...



FILMS OR TV DRAMAS I WATCH AND HOW I VIEW THEM...
(EXHIBITION)



MEDIA I CREATE AND HOW I CREATE IT...
(MEDIA 2.0/CONVERGENCE)



TASK 4: Get Ahead – Find out what these media terms mean

| Term | Definition |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Cutaway | |
| Intertextuality | |
| Establishing Shot | |
| Mise-en-scene | |
| Graphic Match | |
| Focus push/pull | |
| Push/Pull Media | |
| Long Form Drama | |
| Proxemics | |
| Viral Marketing | |
| Technological Convergence | |
| Mid-shot | |
| POV shot | |
| Arc Shot | |
| Non-diegetic sound | |



TASK 5: WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR NEWS FROM?

For this task, I want you to collect some data on your own news and where you got it from. We will look at this in the first couple of weeks. The stories might be all on the current topic but try and say how they might be different (who do they focus on? What is the issue?) **See my example.**

| What's the story? | Where did you see it? | Who made it? | Do you believe it to be reliable? (Give a rating of between 1 and 5 – 1 = not really; 5= very) |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>About how foodbanks are running out of donations during the coronavirus crisis</i> | <i>A friend shared it on Facebook</i> | <i>The source originally came from the BBC news website</i> | <i>5 – I believe it is very reliable as the BBC is a professional news organisation with trained journalists and the article credits its sources of information</i> |
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TASK 6: MEDIA TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE

For this task, I want you to research and investigate the media technology that is

| What? | When did it begin? | What impact did it have/has it had on Media? |
|--|--------------------|--|
|  <p>Newspapers</p> | | |
|  <p>Cinema</p> | | |
|  <p>Radio</p> | | |
|  <p>TV</p> | | |
|  <p>Home computer</p> | | |
|  <p>TV stations / network</p> | | |
|  <p>The internet</p> | | |



The Smart Phone



Social Media eg
Facebook / Twitter/
YouTube/Instagram/Snapchat

Finally...please use the sheet on the final page to tell me a little bit about your own technological skills or media experience!