Summer Induction Work

Media Studies

HAZELEY 6TH FORM

CHARACTER, CONFIDENCE & CREATIVITY

Deadline: Friday 11th September

The Hazeley Academy

A-Level Media Studies Summer Transition Work 2018 - Due September

Media Studies is a subject that requires you to be up to date on the latest changes in media industries and theoretical developments.

You will be following the **Specification from Eduqas** and will be sitting this as a full A-Level to be examined at the end of Year 13.

With this in mind, your homework comprises of 3 essays demonstrating an understanding of how media language engages audiences, creates narrative, and defines genre.

What do I need to do?

1. Choose one short scene/segment from three TV shows (must be different genres) and analyse how they use techniques to create their genre, narrative and characters, and how they position audiences. (**Each text will require at least 30 minutes of analysis and note taking**)
2. This should include a bullet point list of techniques identified but then must be written up in an **essay format**. The three essays should be 1000 words each. (**Each essay will take around 90 minutes to complete**).

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed against the Eduqas mark scheme for the media language question from an AS exam paper. This question covers the base skills needed when starting the course, covering:

AO2 - Apply knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to analyse media products.

The grade boundaries are:

Band	5	4	3	2	1
Marks	10-9	8-7	6-5	4-3	2-1

Band 5

- Excellent, consistent and accurate application of knowledge and understanding of how media language is used to create meaning.
- Analysis is perceptive, detailed and links use of media language to genre conventions and audience appeal.

Band 4

- Good, accurate application of knowledge and understanding of how media language is used to create meaning.
- Analysis of the advertisement is logical, reasonably detailed and generally links use of media language to genre conventions and audience appeal.

Band 3

- Satisfactory, generally accurate application of knowledge and understanding of how media language is used to create meaning.
- Analysis of the advertisement is reasonable and straightforward, sometimes linking use of media language to genre conventions and audience appeal.

Band 2

- Basic application of knowledge and understanding of how media language is used to create meaning, although this is likely to lack clarity, relevance and accuracy
- Analysis of the advertisement is undeveloped and there may be a tendency to simply describe features rather than linking use of media language to genre conventions and audience appeal.

Band 1

- Minimal, if any, application of knowledge and understanding of how media language is used to create meaning, with significant inaccuracies, irrelevance and a lack of clarity
- Analysis is superficial and generalised with no links to genre conventions and audience appeal.

What should I be analysing?

You can choose any 3 TV shows as long as they are different genres. They can be Drama, Comedy, Documentary, Sports, News, Sci-Fi, Horror, Superhero, Spy…

The scene you are analysing should only be about one minute long as you will need to focus on specific technical details rather than the narrative of the scene.

How does this link to my PLC?

Analysis of media language and how it creates meaning is at the centre of everything we do in media studies and will relate to all of your work over the next two years. With two exams at the end of year 13 which are largely based on essay answers it is also essential that you start developing these skills straight away. Essays in Media Studies are also slightly different to English and other subjects as there is a greater need for concise technical responses – this is a skill we will be developing over the course!

What will I need to do?

1. Choose three good scenes/segments from TV shows of different genres that are rich in their use of media language.
2. Analyse them considering the audio codes, visual codes and technical codes that are used.
3. Explore how these choices of media language create genre and are used to engage audiences.
4. Write out your three essays explaining your findings.

What do I need to hand in?

I want you to include the notes from your analysis so that I can see what you have identified as key elements of media language from your research. This will help me understand your ability to deconstruct media texts.

You will then hand in your three essays. From these I can ascertain the strength of your writing but also consider how you have selected, edited and presented the findings of your analysis.

If you have any problems with these essays, contact kmcfadden@thehazeleyacademy.com

Sources of Wider Reading

- *WJEC/Eduqas Media Studies for A Level Year 1 & AS – Christine Bell and Lucas Johnson*
- *Film as Social Practice – Graeme Turner*
- *Media Control – Noam Chomsky*
- *Manufacturing Consent – Edward S Hermann & Noam Chomsky*

Useful Websites

- http://www.mediaknowall.com/as_alevel/alevel.php
- http://libguides.utdallas.edu/c.php?g=217728&p=1437866
- http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies/as-a-level/

Online courses – link to three useful online course

- https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/collections/media

Deconstructing Media Texts	☹	😐	☺	What I could do to improve
Can identify a range of different types of media language				
Can analyse how technical choices of media language create meaning				
Understands how different elements of media language combine to create meaning				
Can explore how media language choices are read by audiences				
Can explore how media language creates representations				
Understand how media language is used to define genre				

How the scene from Peaky Blinders Season 1/Episode 1 creates an atmosphere and ideas about the character Tommy Shelby

This scene is key because it is when the audience see that the character Tommy Shelby has decided not to return the guns the Peaky Blinders have stolen, going back on the promise he had earlier made. This decision is very dangerous and will put the gang at risk and so it is important that the audience are shown that it is a weighty, dangerous and important decision. It is also the first time in the series that we are given real insight into the character of Tommy Shelby.

The setting is a canal wharf at night. It is virtually empty, dirty and somewhat desolate; all in all an ideal setting for criminal activity. An establishing shot is used at the start of the scene to allow the audience to place the scene. Lighting is important in creating a mysterious atmosphere; as well as the darkness there is white light which highlights drifting smoke or mist and a red/orange glow form fire. The drifting smoke/mist adds a mysterious edge, whereas the semiotics of the red lighting links to danger and possibly to hell. The contrast between these two lights may represent the choice that Tommy needs to make, positive or negative, safety or danger, return the guns or keep them.

As the scene progresses hand held cameras are largely used and we can see that this helps to position the audience so that they feel that they are looking in on the conversation between Tommy and Uncle Charlie. The jerky motion of the camera gives a naturalistic feel helping to place the audience in the scene, rather than at home watching it. This technique is amplified with the use of a long shot, with some crates positioned between the audience and the characters. With this shot it feels very much like we are hidden behind the crates, eavesdropping on a private conversation.

When we close in on the two characters lighting is again used and now it is used to show the decision that Tommy has made. He is positioned above fire meaning that the red light is thrown up at his face. By lighting him from below shadows also give him a somewhat demonic look; he has decided to keep the guns, a devilish choice that will bring danger. The use of fire for lighting also means that his face has shadows constantly shifting on it, which could represent the turmoil of his decision or the danger that it will place him in; nothing is predictable anymore and the stability that has previously been there will now be thrown into a state of flux. To emphasise this disruption to the equilibrium the camera goes slightly out of focus a couple of times. These choices are important in creating Tommy's representation; dangerous and unpredictable.

During the conversation close ups of the face are generally used allowing the audience to see the emotions of the two characters. It is interesting to consider the characters' facial expressions and body language during the conversation. Tommy's face is largely emotionless representing his steely determination, whereas we can see the nervousness of Uncle Charlie. Tommy also looks straight ahead of him rather than at Uncle Charlie; Uncle Charlie's face is turned towards Tommy. This shows that Tommy is Charlie's superior and that he is in control. When Uncle Charlie warns Tommy of the danger of his decision, Tommy turns towards him for a second and laughs, but this is not a laugh of humour and seems rather to convey a level of superiority, or possibly insanity. Either Tommy craves the danger he is bringing or he is amused by Charlie's inability to understand his plan.

Sound is used in this scene to help create ideas. On the whole there is not any non-diegetic sound, allowing the diegetic sound of the canal wharf to create the atmosphere. This naturalist usage, along with the hand held camera helps the audience to feel that they are there, and so build up the tension of this key scene. However, right at the end, after we know Tommy's decision there is some non-diegetic sound added. This eerie and sinister music emphasises the danger of the decision that Tommy has made and is also used for the transition to the next scene, which focuses on Tommy's nemesis, Chester Campbell.