

Practice Papers for GCSE AQA

Media Two

Sixth Edition, September 2024

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Teacher's Introduction

This material is intended to help prepare students for the AQA (8572) Media Studies GCSE (9–1) Media Two specification, examined from 2023 onwards.

Five examination papers are provided, each one closely modelled on AQA's new examination format. Each paper includes mark schemes and Indicative content for each question.

Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

All the **Close Study Products** for **assessment from 2026** are covered across the five papers, and questions are drawn from AQA's guidance, covering both the key topics for questions, and also some of the less common areas. Printed copies of the close study products are not included in the resource as access is provided by the exam board. The papers include questions relating to all aspects of the theoretical framework, media theories and relevant contexts. Detailed analysis of all the products is provided in the indicative content.



Pages from this resource which are relevant to the set products for **2025** assessment are temporarily available on the ZigZag Education Support Files system, which can be accessed via **zzed.uk/productsupport**

Working through all five papers will provide students with an excellent opportunity not only to extend and refine their knowledge, but also to get used to the question style, format and approach of the exam, and to practise their examination skills and techniques.

Extensive mark schemes are provided for every question. Each mark scheme gives either the correct answer, or detailed relevant and indicative content for that question.

Detailed indicative content is included along with a mark scheme for each relevant question. This gives students (and teachers) a clear idea of what kind of ideas *could* be addressed in the answer. It helps students to improve and develop their knowledge and their exam technique.

The materials here are based on my experience as an examiner for a well-known examining body, and on the materials provided by AQA on their website.

The Practice Papers can be used as classwork, practice tests, or as mock exams. Students can self-assess, peer-assess or be teacher-assessed. Students could do the Practice Papers as 'open book' exams with all their notes present, or as a 'proper' test, with only clean copies of the Set Products available, depending on the level of challenge required.

If students and teachers would like to study the exam format in more depth, analysing and practising the different types of questions, understanding the mark schemes and practising and applying their examination skills for the Media Studies exams, then ZigZag also has a detailed and helpful **Exam Preparation Pack** for GCSE AQA Media Studies available for this specification, found here: **[ZZed.uk/11838-website](https://zzed.uk/11838-website)**

September 2024

Fourth Edition, January 2023

This resource has been updated in line with specification changes to set products for exams from 2023.

Fifth Edition, April 2024

This resource has been updated in line with specification changes to set products for exams from 2025.

Sixth Edition, September 2024

This resource has been updated in line with specification changes to set products for exams from 2026.

Examination Information

Close Study Products

All the sample questions, answers and activities are based on the Close Study Product.

Television:

- *His Dark Materials* (2020) Series 2 Episode 1 'The City of Magpies'
- *Dr Who*, 'An Unearthly Child' (1963)

Online, social and participatory media including video games:

- *Marcus Rashford* – online, social and participatory media
- *Kim Kardashian* – online, social and participatory media
- *Lara Croft Go* – video game
- *BLACKPINK The Game* – video game

Newspapers:

- *The Daily Mirror*
- *The Times*

Advertising and marketing

- Galaxy television advert featuring Audrey Hepburn
- OMO print advertisement (1955)
- Represent television advert featuring Lady Leshurr for the NHS blood donation campaign

Radio:

- Radio 1 Launch Day. The Tony Blackburn Breakfast Show (1967)
- Kiss Breakfast on Kiss Radio

Film:

- *Black Widow* (2021)
- *I, Daniel Blake* (2016)

Magazines:

- Front cover of *Tatler* January 2021
- Front cover of *Heat* 21–27 November 2020

Music videos:

- The Arctic Monkeys – 'I Bet You Look Good on the Dance Floor'
- BLACKPINK – 'How You Like That'

The Exam

The exam consists of two papers, each one of which is 30 minutes and 84 marks.

Media One

Section A: Media Language, Representations, Contexts

Two forms of media:

- magazine
- advertising and marketing
- newspapers
- online, social and participatory media and video games
- can also include an unseen text

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Section B: Audiences, Industries, Contexts

Two forms taken from:

- radio
- music videos
- film (film is only assessed for Industries, not Audiences)
- newspapers
- online, social and participatory media and video games
- can also include an unseen text

Media Two

Section A: any aspects from Media Language, Representations, Audiences, Industries

- television, including responses to an extract from one of the two television C

Section B: any aspects from Media Language, Representations, Audiences, Industries

One form from:

- newspapers
- online, social and participatory media and video games

The Assessment Objectives

The examinations assess students against AO1 and AO2. AO3 is assessed via the NEA (coursework).

AO1: You must show your **knowledge and understanding** of:

- the theoretical framework of media
- contexts of media and how contexts influence media products and processes

AO2: You must **analyse** media products by:

- using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their context
- making judgments and drawing conclusions from this analysis

For marking purposes, the AOs have been further divided as shown below. Each of these are further divided into sub-divisions of the AOs.

AO1 1a Show knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies.

AO1 1b Show understanding of the theoretical framework of media studies.

AO1 2a Show knowledge of the contexts of media and their influence on products

AO1 2b Show understanding of the contexts of media and their influence on products

AO2 1a Analyse media products using the theoretical framework, including in relation to their context

AO2 1b Make judgments and draw conclusions from this analysis.

However, in all but the shortest questions, these do tend to overlap significantly. For example, to show *knowledge and understanding* (AO1 1b, AO1 2b) without also showing *knowledge* (AO1 1a, AO1 2a) is difficult. Similarly, to make judgments and draw conclusions (AO2 1b) without having necessarily at some point shown *knowledge and understanding* (AO1 1a, AO1 2a) is also difficult.

Weightings

Media One and Media Two are each worth 35% of your total Media Studies GCSE. The NEA (coursework) is worth 30% of your total Media Studies GCSE, and your coursework, or Non-examined Assessment.

- In Media One, 20% is AO1, and 15% is AO2. This means that in Media One, knowledge and understanding is assessed, and analysis.
- In Media Two, 10% is AO1, and 25% is AO2. This means that in Media Two, knowledge and understanding is assessed, and analysis.

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Using the Indicative Content

The indicative content is there to show you what kind of points could be considered to be given due credit. There is no expectation that you should cover the points in the indicative content, and certainly no expectation that you should cover ALL the points in the indicative content.

Examination Tips for Students

- Timing issues – as a very rough guide, there is about 1 minute per mark (84 marks in 84 minutes). Therefore a 6-mark question should take about 6 minutes to think about and answer, and should take about 20 minutes to plan and write. Expectations of how much you should be guided by this.
- Your 'English' skills and writing ability – known as the Quality of Written Communication – are considered in longer (20-mark+) questions. It isn't the first or main factor in awarding marks for spelling, punctuation, paragraphs and developing a clear line of reasoning. It is a factor in awarding marks, but it does not mean that poorer answers should still be clear and well-structured. It is not marked in these questions.
- Extended response questions give you the opportunity to develop your ideas, and to show a line of reasoning which is logical, relevant and coherent.
- Synoptic questions require you to range more freely across all the topics and to draw on your course.
- Use of subject-specific terminology is important and is rewarded in higher marks (3 and above). However, answers without this terminology can still access the higher marks if they show sufficient other strengths. However, you should become very familiar with the terminology. Consult and test yourself on AQA's published list of subject-specific terminology: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/resources/media-studies/gcse/media-studies/teach/>
- Answers may show either breadth (covering a lot of points in not much detail) or depth (covering a few points but addressing these in more detail). There will never be time to cover everything.
- Strengths in one area can outweigh weaknesses in another area, and marking is based on what you have written rather than what you have not included.
- In Media Studies, there are always many possible ways to respond to questions. Unusual or atypical answers will always be given due credit if they meet the mark scheme.

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Specification Cross Reference

Paper		Media Form							
		Advertising	Magazines	Radio	Music Videos	Film	Television	OSP Media	Newspapers
1	Media One	<i>Galaxy</i> <i>OMO</i>	<i>Tatler</i> Unseen	<i>Kiss Breakfast</i> <i>Radio 1</i>				<i>Marcus Rashford</i> <i>Kim Kardashian</i> <i>BLACKPINK The Game</i> <i>Lara Croft Go</i>	
	Media Two						<i>Doctor Who</i> <i>Class</i>		<i>The Times</i> <i>The Daily Mirror</i>
2	Media One	Unseen <i>Galaxy</i>	<i>Heat</i> <i>Tatler</i>		<i>The Arctic Monkeys</i> <i>BLACKPINK</i>				<i>The Daily Mirror</i>
	Media Two						<i>Doctor Who</i> <i>His Dark Materials</i>	<i>Marcus Rashford</i> <i>Kim Kardashian</i> <i>BLACKPINK The Game</i> <i>Lara Croft Go</i>	
3	Media One	<i>Galaxy</i> <i>Represent</i>		<i>Kiss Breakfast</i>	<i>The Arctic Monkeys</i> <i>BLACKPINK</i>				Unseen <i>The Times</i>
	Media Two						<i>Doctor Who</i> <i>His Dark Materials</i>	<i>Kim Kardashian</i> <i>Marcus Rashford</i> <i>BLACKPINK The Game</i> <i>Lara Croft Go</i>	
	Media One		<i>Heat</i>		<i>The Arctic Monkeys</i>	<i>I, Daniel Blake</i>		Unseen	



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ZigZag Practice Exam

Supporting GCSE (9–1) AQA Media Studies

Media Studies

Media Two

Practice Paper 1

Name

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Extra materials required:

Spare paper for making viewing notes

Instructions:

- Answer all the questions.
- Write in the spaces provided.
- Cross out any work you do not wish to be marked.

Information:

- The marks for each question are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 84.
- Please use good English and present your work clearly.
- Questions **2** and **4** require an **extended response**. In these answers, you will be assessed on the quality of your written communication, including developing a clear and sustained line of argument which is logical, relevant and coherent.
- Question **5** is a **synoptic** question. In your answer, you should use your knowledge from across the full media course. In this answer, you will also be assessed on the quality of your written communication, including developing a clear and sustained line of argument which is logical, relevant and coherent.

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Section A – Television

Answer all of the questions in the space provided

You will be given two minutes to read through the questions

Then the extract will be shown twice.

The extract is from: *Doctor Who* (1963) BBC TV series, Episode 1: 'An Unearthly Child'

Watch from minute 18.16 to 22.36 (the last 3.20 minutes prior to the credits)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRsFKK34SFY>

First viewing: watch the extract and make notes.

You will then have five minutes between the first and second viewing.

Second viewing: view the extract again and add to your notes.

After the second viewing you may start writing your answers on the questions.

You are advised to spend around 35 minutes on this section.

0 1 . 1

Television programmes can be interpreted using semiotics. Briefly explain the term 'semiotics'.

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0 1 . 2

How is genre conveyed in this extract from *Doctor Who*, 'An Unearthly Child'?

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[illegible]

The narrative features of a text engage the audience. How far does *Doctor Who*, 'An Unearthly Child' (Close Study Product) show

COPY

SECTION 9

INSPIRE

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[illegible]

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INSIDE

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0 2

To what extent has the genre of fantasy television developed over time?
In your answer you should refer to *His Dark Materials*, 'The City of Mirrors'
'The Unearthly Child' (1963) (Close Study Products).



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You are advised to spend around 40 minutes on this section.


Briefly state the role of IPSO (the Independent Press Standards Office)




In your answer you should refer to *The Times* and the *Daily Mirror* (C)



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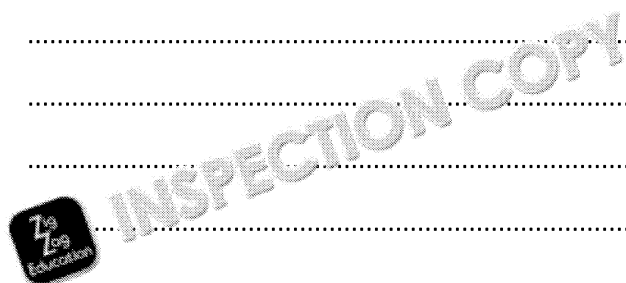
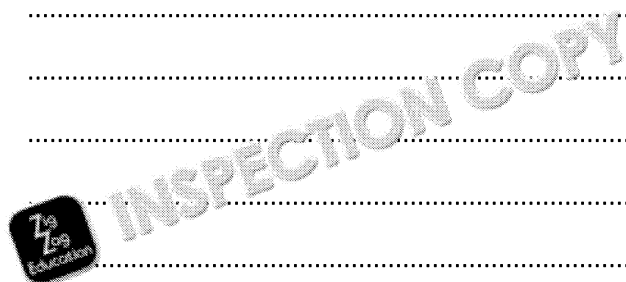
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'A free press is a positive force in society.'
How far do you agree with this statement?

In your answer you should refer to the *Daily Mirror* (Close Study Product)

You will be rewarded for using relevant ideas and information from all aspects of the theoretical framework and relevant media contexts.



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END OF QUESTIONS



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Preview of Questions Ends Here

This is a limited inspection copy. Sample of questions ends here to avoid students previewing questions before they are set. See contents page for details of the rest of the resource.

Practice Paper 5

MEDIA TWO

Q	Part	Marking guidance
01	1	<p>A01 1a: Show knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies</p> <p>2 marks – must include the key point clearly explained, possibly with an example</p> <p>1 mark – an explanation that is not fully clear or complete and/or an example that does not have sufficient explanation of the concept</p> <p>0 marks – no work worthy of credit</p> <p>Key point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public service broadcasting is not commercial and is intended to serve the population. <p>Partial explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBs are not commercial or intended to primarily make money. PSBs do not use advertising. The BBC is a PSB because it is funded by the licence fee. The BBC is a PSB because it has a remit to serve all sectors of the population. <p>Other relevant points should always be considered.</p>

01	2	<p>A02 1a Analyse media products in relation to the theoretical framework of media studies</p> <table> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Mark range</th><th>Description</th></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>7–8</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent analysis of the product: detailed, covering even the subtler aspects of how the product uses media language to convey genre Thorough and effective focus on this extract Subject-specific terminology is used accurately throughout </td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>5–6</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good analysis of the product: detailed, engaging, covering relevant aspects of how the product uses media language to convey genre Consistent focus on this extract Subject-specific terminology is used largely accurately </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>3–4</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory analysis, commenting on the obvious, straightforward aspects of how the product uses media language to convey genre Some focus on this extract Subject-specific terminology is used occasionally with accuracy or relevance </td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>1–2</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic analysis, describing the more obvious aspects of how the product uses media language Little focus on genre OR focuses on aspects of media language not linked to genre OR little focus on this extract Little or no relevant use of subject-specific terminology </td></tr> <tr> <td>0</td><td>0</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit </td></tr> </table> <p>May consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inclusion of supernatural characters such as witches, secret societies, mythical daemons, which are conventional of fantasy drama Audience to suspend their expectations – when magic is involved, there is more freedom High quantity of enigma codes – conventional for fantasy drama, often used in an episode in a series or a recap. The voice-over for this section provides (or reminds the audience of) enigma codes such as ‘a child’s destiny’, ‘bring the end of destiny’, or the nature of the ‘Grumman expedition’ Range of locations – fantasy drama often creates a dynamic environment of locations, settings and worlds. This extract contains unrecognisable locations – Lyra’s world, a mysterious city in the sky; modern, realistic locations (Will’s world); beautiful external locations (Northern Lights, hot air balloons, etc.); some dark and mysterious internal locations (Magisterium scenes, etc.). 	Level	Mark range	Description	4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent analysis of the product: detailed, covering even the subtler aspects of how the product uses media language to convey genre Thorough and effective focus on this extract Subject-specific terminology is used accurately throughout 	3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good analysis of the product: detailed, engaging, covering relevant aspects of how the product uses media language to convey genre Consistent focus on this extract Subject-specific terminology is used largely accurately 	2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory analysis, commenting on the obvious, straightforward aspects of how the product uses media language to convey genre Some focus on this extract Subject-specific terminology is used occasionally with accuracy or relevance 	1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic analysis, describing the more obvious aspects of how the product uses media language Little focus on genre OR focuses on aspects of media language not linked to genre OR little focus on this extract Little or no relevant use of subject-specific terminology 	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit
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0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit 																		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extract contains a recap of the previous series, showing a hu characters, demonstrating the dynamic nature of the genre thro the storyline and characters. Editing is used in the extract to demonstrate the dynamism of fa conventional camera angles, along with much more unusual ang of Will, some slow-motion shots of dramatic situations, to help th though lots of varied action is happening Unusual and unrecognisable props also build a dynamic mise en <p>Other relevant points should always be considered.</p> <p>Responses must focus on the extract from <i>His Dark Materials</i>. Credit v generalised discussions of the programme as a whole, for discussions for reference to other programmes.</p>
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01	3	<p>AO2 1a Analyse media products in relation to the theoretical fra</p> <p>AO2 1b Make judgements and draw conclusions from this ana</p> <table> <tr> <th>Level</th><th>Mark range</th><th>Description</th></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>9–12</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent analysis of the extract: detailed, cri even the subtler aspects of how the extract m audience needs Clear and effective conclusions drawn, supp examples from the extract Subject-specific terminology is used accurate throughout </td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>5–8</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory analysis of the extract, comment and straightforward aspects of how the extra audience needs Some reasonable conclusions drawn but incor description with analysis, sometimes support the extract Some relevant subject-specific terminology is </td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>1–4</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic analysis of the extract, describing the m aspects of how the extract may satisfy audier Basic conclusions drawn but largely descript by examples from the extract Little or no relevant use of subject-specific te </td></tr> <tr> <td>0</td><td>0</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit </td></tr> </table> <p>May consider:</p> <p>Uses and gratifications/ four needs / audience pleasures / Blumler and Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extract offers information to the audience about the previous s detailed recap of the narrative, and an introduction to the character such as prophecies/discoveries are explained to us. While this is an example of information, it is 'false' or fantasy inform useful in the real world. This extract doesn't really satisfy the audience's need for informati <p>Entertainment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a lot of drama and tension in this extract, all of which is lik audience There is mystery and supernatural elements, both of which enterta Witches and prophecies are mentioned in the voice-over. The range of locations helps to engage the audience and they will a some of the more picturesque landscapes. Many of the characters have dramatic discussions and arguments in that they are about to do something dramatic (e.g. Mrs Coulter stor corridor being tracked by the camera), showing tension and high e The portal plot line is interesting and special effects are used to cre portal, and the magical corridor through which both Lyra and Will diegetic sounds are used to emphasise the mysterious aspect of this the audience. 	Level	Mark range	Description	3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent analysis of the extract: detailed, cri even the subtler aspects of how the extract m audience needs Clear and effective conclusions drawn, supp examples from the extract Subject-specific terminology is used accurate throughout 	2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory analysis of the extract, comment and straightforward aspects of how the extra audience needs Some reasonable conclusions drawn but incor description with analysis, sometimes support the extract Some relevant subject-specific terminology is 	1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic analysis of the extract, describing the m aspects of how the extract may satisfy audier Basic conclusions drawn but largely descript by examples from the extract Little or no relevant use of subject-specific te 	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit
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0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit 															

- There is entertainment offered in the depiction of the daemons in L. audience will enjoy seeing the animated animal companions, and th them and their humans creates an intriguing dynamic.
- The alternative dimension/world allows the audience to feel a sens

Identity

- There a lot of representations for families to identify with or even a
- Children feel represented, as both main protagonists are young. Lyra representation of a young girl who takes control of her own life and see this when Lyra spies on her father's talk at the university.
- Lyra is funny, witty and strong, and so provides a positive role mod
- People from a range of backgrounds will identify with the character as the actors come from a variety of countries – Sudan, Trinidad, Li Malta. This allows a more diverse audience to see themselves repre programme.
- Modern audiences will personally connect with the setting, especia recognisable aspects of the modern world – modern school uniform, helps them to create connection with Lyra's world on a personal from the world (Will) is able to go through the portal.
- Older female audiences might find Mrs Coulter an inspiring female. Although she is the antagonist, she is strong and stands up for hers
- Parents will see issues shown in the programme that they can relat and father discuss her, and Mrs Coulter discusses her need and des
- Separated parents and children from separated parents might get g seeing their family dynamic reflected in this episode of a fantasy dr

Companionship

- The series has an ongoing focus on a small group of young characte allowing the audience to 'get to know' and engage with the lives of Relationships develop and change, keeping the audience interested relationship between Lyra and Will.

Overall

- Overall, the extract satisfies the needs for entertainment and identi and perhaps the needs for information and companionship less suc interpretations are acceptable.

Other relevant points should always be considered.

Candidates may acceptably conclude that this extract does or does not audience's needs, that it satisfies some more than others, or that it only various needs.

Responses must focus on the extract from *His Dark Materials*. Credit wi generalised discussions of the programme as a whole, for discussions o general or for reference to other programmes.



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02

A01 2a Show knowledge of the contexts of media and their influence on media and processes. [5 marks]
A01 2b Show understanding of the contexts of media and their influence on media and processes. [5 marks]
A02 1b Make judgments and draw conclusions from this analysis. [5 marks]
***Extended response: QWC and development of a line of argument**

Level	Mark range	Description
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media, demonstrated by thoroughly effective discussion of media contexts and industry influence media texts Excellent, valid and astute judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by relevant examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used consistently throughout The quality of the written communication is excellent The line of argument is clear, logical and well developed
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media, demonstrated by frequently effective discussion of media contexts and industry influence media texts Good judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by relevant examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used frequently * The quality of the written communication is good * The line of argument is clear
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media, demonstrated by some relevant discussion of media contexts and industry influence media texts Satisfactory judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used largely appropriately * The quality of the written communication is satisfactory * The meaning is usually clear * The line of argument is not always evident
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media, demonstrated by little discussion of how media contexts and industry influence media texts A few basic judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used occasionally and not always relevantly * The quality of the written communication is basic * The line of argument is often unclear * There is a limited and unclear line of argument
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal knowledge and understanding of the contexts of media, demonstrated by little or no discussion of media contexts and industry influence media texts Minimal or dubious judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by examples from the Close Study Products Little use of subject-specific terminology * The quality of the written communication is poor * The line of argument is unclear * There is no discernible line of argument
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit

May consider:

Contexts of production

- In 1963, there were only two TV channels, so programmes had to appeal to a broad demographic – potentially to half the population. At the same time, however, many 'invisible' groups in society, such as recent immigrants, LGBT people, etc., simply were not considered as part of the demographic. So while early television may have appealed to a large mass audience, it also appealed to a very mainstream audience.

- The BBC is a public service broadcaster, funded by the licence fee, and has to remit about what it produces. Initially the BBC saw *Doctor Who* as a programme, to teach teens about science and history. The BBC has said that the programmes it creates can now be seen as more geared towards education. However, the BBC still has the remit to serve and benefit the public, and its programmes still uphold positive social values and still have to 'inform, educate and entertain' and 'serve all audiences'.
- The advent of satellite TV, digital TV, online TV and so on means there are more channels on offer and many more ways of accessing TV. Therefore programmes have to appeal to a narrower demographic. This can be seen in the early *Doctor Who* which appealed to a broad family audience, and then in a more modern spin-off like *Doctor Who: The Next Doctor* which was shown on BBC Three and aims at a narrow young adult audience. The characters and storyline and so on are all geared towards meeting the interests of this audience.
- The budget for the early series of *Doctor Who* was around £2,000 per episode, which is very low, with a very limited budget for special effects, whereas *His Dark Materials* on its release, the most expensive BBC drama ever made.
- In the 1960s and 1970s *Doctor Who* had a similar budget to a soap opera. It was filmed on one TV studio, and there was very limited movement. Early episodes were filmed using a three- or four-camera set-up. Camera movement was limited. It was hard to do much tracking, or any shots that involved a lot of movement. This produced an effect more like watching a play.
- Early episodes were filmed in black and white.
- For example, although the Continuous Screen Overlay (CSO) technique was invented by the 1970s, it was too expensive to use as it would have disrupted the production schedule. In Tom Baker's Zygon episode, the Zygon was shown to be in the sky. Rather than do this with CSO, they simply made an eye appear to be in the sky.
- All the visual effects had to be created in a studio and recorded in real time. They used to use spark machines, smoke machines and so on. Many of the Cybermen, were obviously just actors in rubber or foam costumes.
- The only post-production available in the 1960s and 1970s was in the studio. They could overdub sound effects such as the iconic noise of the TARDIS.
- The original sound of the TARDIS was created by rubbing a bunch of piano strings. Then the sound was repeated, slowed down and then mixed together, and feedback was added in to make it seem more other-worldly.
- The original Daleks were each operated by someone inside them, with a lever to turn the lights on and off, waggle the eye stalk, set off the smoke machine and so on.
- Sets such as other planets would often be built from cardboard.
- Stock footage of, for example, explosions would be used, instead of creating something specifically for the programme, and added in post-production, but it often looked out of place.
- The budget for recent series was around £1 million per episode.
- The potential of CGI, green screen and other special effects has allowed more modern BBC drama such as *His Dark Materials* to create much more convincing aliens and other worlds – we can see this in the very convincing miniaturised worlds of *His Dark Materials*.
- Camera and recording technology is much more advanced, allowing for more tracking and crane shots, the creation of new worlds with CGI, and so on. Technology which can create animated talking animals.
- Film quality is higher and more consistent; HD quality film is becoming the norm.

Contexts of reception

- The segmentation of audiences has accelerated – programmes are now more targeted at more niche audiences. This has resulted in some spin-offs – *The Doctor Who: The Next Doctor* for the older children, and *Class* for the teen group.
- Technologies that have allowed for niche audiences have led to changes in the way programmes are made too: this segmentation means programmes have to appeal to a specific audience group, e.g. *His Dark Materials* appeals to a younger audience through its young protagonists and animal characters.
- Audiences have much higher expectations in terms of how the BBC should represent the world, which has affected representations in *Doctor Who* and *His Dark Materials*.
 - For a long time, each iteration of the Doctor was a white male, with a younger female companion, reflecting and reinforcing traditional gender roles, with the man as powerful and in control and the woman as the helper. The woman helper's role has often been to provide an emotional support for the Doctor.

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	<p>the programme, further reinforcing the idea that men are active while women are more passive and more emotional and sensitive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in society, particularly advances in equality for women, reflected in changes to programmes created by the BBC. For example, <i>Adventures</i> (a spin-off series of <i>Doctor Who</i>) placed the companion as a woman as powerful and in control. Recent companions have sometimes been more challenging to the Doctor and more capable themselves, e.g. Rose Tyler, Clara Oswald and Bill Potts. In 2017, it was announced that the next regeneration of <i>Doctor Who</i> would be as a woman. The BBC announced that the next Doctor would be black. Representations of race across the BBC have developed to reflect social and political contexts. For example, in the 1963 episode of <i>Doctor Who</i> refers to 'the savage mind' of 'Red Indians' not able to understand modern technology. This dismissive and colonialist attitude seems very different to more recent seasons have shown a much more positive attitude towards different cultures and races. <i>His Dark Materials</i> has a much more representative of current British society with a wide range of ethnicities represented. Susan in the 1963 <i>Doctor Who</i> seems childish and has little control over her life. She is obedient to adults such as her grandfather. In <i>His Dark Materials</i>, she is capable, more active and more in control of her own life. This is because of changing society, where teenagers and young people are more respected, and 'blind obedience' to adults is not expected any more. This reflects the segmentation of the target audience. <p>Other relevant points should always be considered.</p> <p>Candidates may acceptably conclude that technological developments have influenced the production and reception of television programmes, or that social aspects have been influenced.</p> <p>NB: This question is also assessed for the quality of written communication. Candidates should develop a clear and sustained line of argument which is logical, relevant and well supported.</p>
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03	<p>AO1 1a: Show knowledge of the theoretical framework of media studies</p> <p>2 marks – must include the key point clearly explained, possibly with an example</p> <p>1 mark – an explanation that is not fully clear or complete and/or an example</p> <p>0 marks – no work worthy of credit</p> <p>Key point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fewer people or organisations owning more of the media OR more organisations and products being owned by fewer people or organisations <p>Partial explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Someone buys up more companies so a lot of companies are owned by one person One newspaper buys another newspaper, so they are both controlled by one person <p>Other relevant points should always be considered.</p>
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AO1 1a Show knowledge of the theoretical framework of media
AO1 1b Show understanding of the theoretical framework of media
AO2 1b Make judgments and draw conclusions from this analysis
***Extended response: QWC and development of a line of argument**

Level	Mark range	Description
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of the media, demonstrated by thoroughly effective discussion of the influence of industries and audiences on media texts Excellent, valid and astute judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported clearly and consistently by relevant examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used consistently and relevantly throughout * The quality of the written communication is excellent * The line of argument is clear, logical and well-developed
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of the media, demonstrated by frequently effective discussion of the influence of industries and audiences on media texts Good judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by relevant examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used frequently and relevantly * The quality of the written communication is good * The line of argument is clear
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of the media, demonstrated by some discussion of the influence of industries and audiences on media texts Satisfactory judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used largely appropriately * The quality of the written communication is satisfactory * The meaning is usually clear * The line of argument is not always evident
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of the media, demonstrated by little discussion of the influence of industries and audiences on media texts A few basic judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by examples from the Close Study Products Subject-specific terminology is used occasionally and not always relevantly * The quality of the written communication is basic * The meaning is often unclear * There is a limited and unclear line of argument
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of the media, demonstrated by little discussion of the influence of industries and audiences on media texts Minimal or dubious judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by examples from the Close Study Products Little use of subject-specific terminology * The quality of the written communication is limited * The meaning is unclear * There is no discernible line of argument
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No work worthy of credit

May consider:

Introduction

- The statement 'Newspapers only ever offer their own interpretation' suggests that newspapers present a version of reality that is filtered by editorial biases, values, and target audience expectations. This analysis of *The Times* and the *Daily Mirror* (Close Study Products) represents their unique interpretations of events.

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Constructions of reality

Media representations:

- All media representations, including those in newspapers, are constructed. No newspaper provides a completely transparent or unbiased view of the world. A newspaper engages in gatekeeping, selecting only a small fraction of events to report, thus offering a narrow, specific, and often biased perspective on reality.
- *The Times* tends to focus on political, international and economic news, reflecting the interests of its affluent, educated readership. For example, in the 2011 Post Office scandal, *The Times* may emphasise the broader implications for public policy and corporate accountability, presenting a more formal and analytical coverage.
- The *Daily Mirror*, in contrast, prioritises national news, celebrities and lifestyle, reflecting the interests of its working-class audience. Its coverage of the same event might focus on the personal stories of those affected, using emotive language to generate outrage, presenting the scandal as a failure of the establishment to protect ordinary people.

Selective reporting:

- Both newspapers select news stories and focus on different aspects of events, leading to varied interpretations of the same event. For example, in the coverage of the Post Office scandal, *The Times* might highlight the systemic issues within the organisation, while the *Daily Mirror* might focus on the emotional toll on the victims, portraying them as the primary concern.
- Even when reporting on the same event, the construction of the story reflects the newspaper's values. *The Times* might use a headline like 'Post Office systems after scandal', focusing on future solutions and accountability. The *Daily Mirror* might use a more sensational headline like 'Innocent Post Office lies', emphasising the human cost and stirring public emotion.

Presentation and layout:

- The front page of *The Times* is text-heavy, with a high copy-to-image ratio, reflecting an in-depth approach to news. The design is formal, with longer headlines and a focus on comprehensive analysis.
- In contrast, the *Daily Mirror* uses a more image-led layout, with bigger headlines and a cleaner, sharper look, aligning with its tabloid format. Its front page is designed to quickly engage readers, with a focus on emotional impact.

Audience reception

Demographic influence:

- The interpretation of news by readers is heavily influenced by the social variables such as class, age and gender. Readers of *The Times* are typically from a higher socio-economic class (ABC1), well-educated, and more likely to live in London. This audience is likely to engage with the newspaper's content that aligns with their own views, taking the preferred reading offered by the paper.
- The *Daily Mirror* appeals to a C2DE demographic, including working-class and older readers. This audience may have different concerns and interests. The newspaper's emphasis on human-interest stories and its support for the Labour Party resonates with readers who are likely to accept the preferred readings offered by the paper.

Audience readings:

- **Preferred reading:** Readers of *The Times* may appreciate the newspaper's conservative viewpoint, aligning with their own perspectives on politics, policy and economic issues. Similarly, the *Daily Mirror* may find validation in the newspaper's championing of the 'ordinary' person and its critical stance on the establishment.
- **Negotiated reading:** some readers may accept certain aspects of the coverage while questioning others. For example, a reader of *The Times* might agree with the analysis of the Post Office scandal but disagree with the lack of focus on personal struggles.
- **Oppositional reading:** while less common, oppositional readings occur when a reader rejects the newspaper's portrayal of an event entirely. This might include a *Daily Mirror* reader who disagrees with the newspaper's sensationalist approach and prefers a more balanced, factual representation.

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2024 Post Office scandal

The Times' coverage:

- The *Times* might frame the Post Office scandal as a complex issue of reform, focusing on the legal and technical aspects. The newspaper might tell the story in a way that highlights the responsibilities of corporate leaders and the implications for public trust in institutions.
- The representation of the individuals involved is likely to be framed in terms of the broader consequences for policy and governance, rather than the personal narratives.

Daily Mirror's coverage:

- The *Daily Mirror* would likely focus on the human impact of the scandal, using emotive language to highlight the suffering of the victims. The paper might use headlines that evoke sympathy and anger, such as 'Families destroyed by Post Office scandal'.
- The representation of the individuals involved is likely to be more emotional, with an emphasis on the personal stories that resonate with its readership.

Conclusion

Views, interpretations and interpretation:

The analysis of *The Times* and the *Daily Mirror* demonstrates that each newspaper offers its own interpretation of the world, shaped by their editorial stance, target demographics, and market positions. Each newspaper constructs a narrative that aligns with its values and resonates with its readership, leading to different interpretations of the same events.

- Therefore, it is accurate to say that newspapers provide a filtered version of the world, offering their readers a version of the world that reflects the newspaper's perspective rather than an objective account of events.

Other relevant points should always be considered.

NB: This question is also assessed for the quality of written communication. Students should develop a clear and sustained line of argument which is logical, relevant and well-supported.

NB: Students may argue either for or against the views expressed in the texts. They should offer a balanced argument presenting both sides. These approaches are encouraged.

05

A02 1a Analyse media products using the theoretical framework in relation to their contexts. [10 marks]

A02 1b Make judgments and draw conclusions from this analysis

*Extended synoptic response: QWC and development of a line of argument

Level	Mark range	Description
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent analysis, engaging critically and in depth with the subtler aspects of the text and the relevant contexts • Excellent, valid and astute judgments and conclusions drawn, clearly and consistently supported by relevant examples from the Close Study Product • Subject-specific terminology is used consistently and relevantly throughout * The quality of the written communication is excellent * The line of argument is clear, logical and well-developed
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good analysis, engaging clearly with some of the subtler aspects of the text and the relevant contexts • Good judgments and conclusions drawn, usually supported by relevant examples from the Close Study Product • Subject-specific terminology is used frequently * The quality of the written communication is good * The line of argument is clear

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2	6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory analysis, engaging with the more aspects of the text and the relevant contexts Satisfactory judgments and conclusions drawn supported by examples from the Close Study Product Some subject-specific terminology is used but not fully * The quality of the written communication is satisfactory * The line of argument is not always evident
1	1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic analysis, largely descriptive with only some of the more basic aspects of the text and relevant contexts A few basic judgments and conclusions drawn supported by examples from the Close Study Product Little use of subject-specific terminology * The quality of the written communication is basic * The line of argument is limited and unclear
0	0	Not worthy of credit

May complete

result on print newspapers

Reading a print form is an increasingly outdated way of accessing information for news but also for any information or entertainment.

- In the newspaper industry, print newspapers have to compete with 24-hour news channels, news bulletins being downloadable anywhere, anytime, and up and watch-again services for news bulletins online, news apps, like on smartphones, news through social media channels such as via X (Twitter) etc.
- All these forms tend to be more immediate, more easily updated, more accessible (phones are always carried with us – newspaper shops are not always found) and often cheaper than print newspapers, or even free.
- Digital media allows the audience to personalise the experience and content of particular interest to them, rather than relying on what a news outlet should be interested in.
- However, although content is often free online, there are initial set-up costs that everyone can afford or is able to use a computer or a smartphone. Not everyone always has access to broadband or a good phone signal.
- Smartphone technology has allowed platforms such as broadcasting and online media to converge and be available on a single device.
- In the newspaper industry, print newspapers are converging with online media and blending aspects of the print and online experience.
- This allows for the blending of video with copy, giving a news experience more like watching the news on TV and partly like reading a newspaper.
- It also allows for the reader to click on linked stories and to access more information.
- The sales and circulation of print versions of newspapers are declining.
- Most newspapers have cut their edition price, reducing profits.
- Profits have also fallen as advertisers look elsewhere.
- Most of the decline is attributed to the availability of news on other platforms, online, in phone apps and via social media.
- Therefore, many newspapers have developed a web presence and their print versions are increasingly convergent.
- However, some newspapers, like *The Times*, have simply transferred to an online edition, adding a new platform rather than converging.

Appeal of print newspapers

- Print newspapers have the appeal of tradition and habit – many older people are reluctant to adopt new forms of technology.
- Reading a print newspaper is a public demonstration of your status and affiliation e.g. reading a print copy of *The Times* in public shows others that you are educated and possibly a member of the establishment. This allows you to display 'identity' (uses and gratifications – Blumler and Katz) to a broad audience.
- Displaying identity is much harder when reading online as no one can see what you are reading.
- Completing *The Times* crossword may be more satisfying on paper.
- Print newspapers may have some value in areas where online/Wi-Fi is patchy, such as on public transport and/or during commuting.
- Print newspapers may be 'safer' to read in high-crime areas, as they are not as easily stolen than phones or tablets.

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The Times

- *The Times* is still running a print edition. Unlike many print newspapers, it has a cover price, indicating that it is certain of maintaining its readership.
- Like many newspapers, *The Times* distributes 'bulks' for free. Bulks are given away in airports, on planes and on trains, etc.
- Giving away the bulks in areas where their target demographic may be (e.g. on planes, first class on trains) helps to draw in a new readership and to buy the newspaper at other times, or to subscribe to the online version.
- In 1996, *The Times* placed all its content online on its website for free.
- In 2010 it introduced a paywall for its online content. It was one of the first to charge for online content.
- The news industry as a whole thought the paywall would reduce the reach and market share of *The Times*. Initially, site visits dropped dramatically, but since then *The Times* has found ways to increase site traffic.
- Profits for the newspaper as a whole have increased.
- It has found ways to use the paywall not just to protect content but to enhance exclusivity and to reinforce its place as a quality news provider. It has a smaller, more exclusive audience, rather than the free-to-all model.
- Readers can get two free articles a week, but then have to subscribe to read more. This allows *The Times* to draw in potential readers, who may then become regular subscribers.
- *The Times* magazine is a quarterly print magazine supplement, focusing on culture and lifestyle. It was launched in 2007, dropped in 2013, and relaunched in 2015. *The Times* is selling its 'brand' in 'verticals' and is exploiting its reach to a specific demographic in selling advertising. Publishing a print version gives it a different feel to other high-end magazines.
- Increase in advertising on TV and on the radio. The tag line for recent advertising campaigns has been 'Don't read everything you believe' – drawing on the 'unbiased' reporting, and the 'echo chamber' effect of only reading from a few media sources.
- The rise in fake news has led to some loss of faith in social media and in real news. *The Times* focuses more on its reliability and trustworthiness as a news provider. It emphasises that *The Times* provides full coverage of every side of the story and allowing readers to make up their own mind. *The Times* says 'you get what you pay for', suggesting that using a paywall site news is more reliable. The print copy allows you to get 'real' news and 'real' investigative journalism.

Other relevant points should always be considered.

NB: As a synoptic question, students should be rewarded for using relevant information from across the course, including aspects of the theoretical and relevant media contexts. This question is also assessed for the quality of communication and for the ability to develop a clear and sustained line of argument, logical, relevant and coherent.

NB: Students may argue either for or against the views expressed in the sources. They should offer a balanced argument presenting both sides. These approaches are encouraged.

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Preview of Answers Ends Here

This is a limited inspection copy. Sample of answers ends here to stop students looking up answers to their assessments. See contents page for details of the rest of the resource.