

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

MEDIA STUDIES

J200

For first teaching in 2017

J200/01 Summer 2023 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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Paper 1 series overview

J200/01 Television and Promoting Media is one of two examination components for this GCSE. This was the fifth sitting of this qualification since its inception in 2019, but only the third full sitting due to the changes to the assessment of GCSEs in summer 2020 and 2021.

This paper targets both AO1 (knowledge and understanding) and AO2 (analysis) questions and includes a synoptic element.

To do well on this paper candidates need to be prepared to:

- analyse an unseen extract from one of the set products for crime drama and to show their understanding of media language and representation
- make judgements and reach conclusion in at least two questions, which requires candidates to formulate a response that creates a line of reasoning or argument and concludes in response to the question stem
- make links to the wider theoretical framework of Media Studies in at least one question
- make links between contexts and representation.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used their time productively by answering all the questions • correctly identified which areas of the theoretical framework and contexts were being assessed in each question • made judgements in Questions 2 and 3 and reached a conclusion in Question 3 • made excellent reference to the uses and gratifications theory and illustrated this knowledge with detailed examples from <i>The Lego Movie Videogame</i> in Question 8 • used their wider knowledge of industry in Questions 4 and 7 • made very clear links between identified contexts and their influence on the representation of Britishness in Question 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • missed out questions through poor time management • described rather than analysed, in Questions 2, 3 and 9 • did not refer to the wider theoretical framework in Question 3 or were unable to explain how social/cultural contexts influence the representation of Britishness in <i>The Avengers</i> • confused the BBC's mission to 'inform, educate and entertain' with its role as a PSB in Question 4 • wrongly stated that 'distribution' is the stage of the film process where the film is screened in cinemas in Question 6 • described the appearance of heroes and villains, with a full focus on media language, rather than analysing how they were represented in Question 9.

Question 2

2 Analyse how far the extract creates conflict.

In your answer you must:

- analyse aspects of the extract using examples to support your analysis
- judge how far these aspects create a feeling of conflict.

[10]

Question 2 required candidates to widen their analysis of the extract by referring to the other elements of media language and/or representation, and to make a judgement in relation to how far the extract creates conflict. To reach Level 3, candidates needed to identify at least two examples using media terminology in these examples. Many excellent responses to this question discussed how the mix of the diegetic sounds of the police siren, the raised voices between Jake and Ryan and the voices of Lino/Donna expressing their disappointment worked together to establish and build conflict between Jake and the rest of the team as illustrated in Exemplar 1. Other responses discussed how Jake's pained expression, captured in close-up, and dialogue when he realises his mistake with the road numbers, conveyed his own internal conflict. Many candidates were able to identify how media language was used to convey conflict between the police and the unknown assailants in the car. They referred to the speed of the car chase and the mise-en-scène of the police uniforms and cars, both of which are props associated with entering into conflict in order to keep the public safe.

Some less successful responses retold the narrative in the sequence as a lengthy description, without using any media terminology. A few candidates appeared to be answering a question from a previous series and instead focused on how a feeling of 'threat' was created (Summer 2022 paper) and so it is important that candidates read the question carefully before answering.

Exemplar 1

In the extract, conflict is partially created in different ways.....

.....

Firstly, the extract creates physical conflict, as the fast paced editing and shaky camera places the viewer in the position of the officers, and it is as if we are part of the action. This suggests there is lots going on and there is chaos, and also ~~set~~ presents a conflict between criminals and police officers as this is ~~more~~ the main focus of the chase and extract. The sharp diegetic sound of the tires popping brings the focus back from

Jake's mistake to merge ~~purpose~~ dunes, and the harsh sound also connotes physical conflict. The continued dialogue in person and over the radio also maintains the quick, chaotic pace, as lots is going on in terms of sound, action, and sight, all of which links to ^{energy, chaos and} physical conflict.

Conflict between the two officers is also presented in the extract, after Ryan and Jake lose the criminals. The over the shoulder shot places the viewer in the back of the car with them and we ~~almost~~ feel the tension between the two characters as they are both disappointed. The non-diegetic music cuts out and we hear the incessant ringing of the police siren which could suggest at this moment the only thing keeping them together is their job and duty, and the symbol of the police siren reinforces this, and this will reconcile their conflict.

Finally, the extract creates conflict through linking at a climax and building the tension. Non-diegetic music plays after the police chase which appears calm, but it has an ominous tone which could hint at something foreboding. The a- medium camera shot of Donna pans from a shot of the father and daughter in the background, back to Donna and then returns to the initial shot, but the disappearance of the father and daughter creates suspense, and with the reintroduction of suspenseful music, ^{this} creates conflict as we feel worry and fear.

To conclude, the extract creates physical conflict, conflict between officers and conflict through suspense in different ways, which overall creates a partial feeling of climax, fear, and conflict.

Question 3*

3* How far does the extract challenge the stereotypes of race and ethnicity?

In your answer you must:

- analyse aspects of media language and representation giving detailed examples
- make judgements and draw conclusions

You will be rewarded for drawing together elements from your full course of study.

[15]

Question 3 was a synoptic question that required candidates to refer to more than one area of the theoretical framework of Media Studies (media language, representation, audiences, industries and/or contexts). As with Question 2, this question asked candidates to make a judgement, in this case about 'how far' the extract challenges the stereotypes of race and ethnicity. There were two sets of marks for this question; the first set out of 10 was for how well candidates analysed the extract, with responses in the top level requiring two or more detailed examples. The second set of marks was out of 5 and was for how well the candidate made a judgement and drew a conclusion about how far the extract challenges stereotypes of race and ethnicity.

Many candidates were able to identify how Jake and Ryan were represented anti-stereotypically in the extract, with Jake challenging the stereotype of the white male holding power and responsibility by being the rooky new cop who makes a mistake and loses a suspect. This is illustrated through his performance and the dialogue between him and Ryan. Candidates also discussed how Ryan presented both a reinforcement and a challenge to stereotypes of black males in the British police force by having authority over Jake, being passionate about his job working in the local community, and showing anger and frustration by 'losing his cool' as Exemplar 2 illustrates. Many candidates referenced the wider context by discussing how changes to equality and diversity laws in the UK are illustrated through Ryan's superiority over Jake, so were able to reach the very top marks.

Some less successful responses discussed the episode as a whole, referring to sequences outside of the unseen extract, and therefore struggled to achieve marks beyond the bottom of Level 2. Some candidates mistakenly discussed other areas of representation such as gender and age, without being able to link these areas successfully to a discussion of ethnicity and race, and therefore could not achieve higher than the bottom of Level 2.

Exemplar 2

The extract challenges stereotypes through the character of PC Ryan Draper. He is an officer in a position of authority and is a mentor to Jake, which automatically challenges the ideas of white supremacy and black oppression. He is proud of his job and always strives to do his best for the community, shown through his frustration towards failing a task.

~~and the~~ This could be argued he ~~subverts~~ supports stereotypes here, as some believe black men show aggression, but this is a weak point and could actually show how he subverts stereotypes as the mise-en-scene of his facial expression shows his emotions, and so emphasises the passion and care he feels for the community and his job. The ^{combined} ^{worn by all} police costumes also show they are all together as a team, subverting the idea that black people are excluded, and this unity makes the viewer feel connected also, as we become involved in their companionship and narrative. To conclude, the extract challenges stereotypes of race and ethnicity, as they all work as a team with Ryan as a black, male, lead, without being affected by opinions on race and ethnicity.

Question 5

5 The Avengers

Explain how social and/or cultural contexts influence the representation of Britishness in television programmes. Refer to the set episode of The Avengers you have studied to support your answer. **[10]**

This question requires candidates to do several things: to explain, to identify different social and/or cultural contexts and to discuss how these contexts influence the representations of Britishness in the programme. The most successful responses were able to identify at least two social and/or cultural contexts and could then explain how these influenced the representation of Britishness in the programme.

Many responses were able to discuss how the representation of Steed as a traditional British 'gentleman' shown through his appearance (traditional suit, hat and umbrella) and respect for the war dead illustrates one side to Britain and its values in the 1960s. This was contrasted with the backdrop of the swinging 60s and the progressive feminist movement, represented by Peel, showing a very different representation of Britain and Britishness as a place of liberal views and moving with the times, as illustrated in Exemplar 3.

Less successful responses did not explain how the social and/or cultural contexts influenced the representation of Britishness, excluding this from their response entirely and so being restricted to Level 2.

Exemplar 3

Additionally, cultural contexts at the time would have influenced the representations of Britishness in *The Avengers* as the 1960s was an era of second wave feminism. In this episode of *The Avengers*, Emma Peel is presented as a competent and independent woman. She is shown going off on private missions to investigate the town and is often successful. This relates to the cultural contexts of 1960s Britain as during this time there was a large push for women's rights. Women were fighting for the contraception pill and for ~~more~~ more equal pay through marches and strikes. Emma Peel's anti-stereotypical representation of gender portrays ~~the~~ British ~~to~~ to be liberal, accepting of change, and pro-woman's rights.

Section B overview

Section B comprised four questions which were a mix of AO1 (knowledge and understanding) and AO2 (analysis) questions. Candidates generally performed well on all questions in this section, in particular Question 7 and 8.

Question 6

SECTION B

Promoting Media

6 What **one** word describes the stage of the film process when the film is screened in cinemas?

..... [1]

Candidates who understood the film process were able to identify that the exhibition stage (or exchange, circulation, consumption) is the stage when the film is screened. Most incorrect responses to this question wrongly identified this as the 'distribution' stage.

Misconception



Distribution is the part of the film process involving the advertising, marketing and release strategy for the film. The point where the film opens in cinemas is the next stage in the process and is not part of the distribution process.

Question 7

7 Explain **two** reasons why film companies producing films such as *The Lego Movie* can afford large production budgets.

1

.....

.....

2

.....

.....

[4]

This question was answered well by most candidates. Many candidates were able to identify how Warner Bros.' position as a conglomerate provided a level of financial security which allowed for large production budgets, or how 'tent pole' films such as *The Lego Movie* are regularly included on the slate for major film companies as they are almost always guaranteed a large profit which can be used to invest in future production budgets. The most detailed responses discussed how Warner Bros.' as a vertically integrated company can benefit financially from this and so can afford large production budgets. Some candidates incorrectly identified that the Lego toys brings in a profit for Warner Bros. because they own the Lego company, which they do not.

Question 8

8 Explain **two** reasons why audiences like to play video games such as *The Lego Movie* video game. Refer to the uses and gratifications theory in your answer.

[10]

Most candidates were able to identify at least two reasons why audiences like to play video games and many responses linked these reasons to uses and gratifications such as personal identity, entertainment or surveillance. Responses in the top level were able to exemplify their response with examples from the video game to illustrate this. For example, young girls enjoying taking on the role of Wyldstyle while playing the game and being a strong, fearless female for the duration of the game (personal identity). Many others discussed how playing the game provides an opportunity for surveillance; learning about the world, what it means to be good or bad and how to develop moral judgement, as Exemplar 3 illustrates. Less successful responses discussed 'active/passive' audiences, instead of the uses and gratifications. Some responses in the bottom of Level 2 and below did not refer to the game and instead discussed generic reasons why people like to play any video game.

Question 9

9 Analyse how heroes and villains are represented in The Lego Movie trailer.

[10]

The most successful responses were able to confidently discuss how heroes and villains were represented through analysis of gender, age, or ethnicity. For example, they did this through discussing how Emmet's representation challenged the stereotype of the strong male hero usually found in action films through his 'ordinary' timid and weak representation of the underdog hero, or how Wyldstyle's 'hero' representation challenged stereotypes of the female damsel in distress. Some responses analysed the representation of the wise old man stereotype of Vitruvius being both a reinforced (gender) and challenged (age) stereotype of a hero, and many were able to discuss how the villain Lord Business conformed to the stereotypes of villains being male, dominant and threatening.

Less successful responses described the appearance of the characters in terms of media language analysis of mise-en-scène, rather than focusing on representation as the question requires. For example, describing the black and red outfit or size of the hair of Lord Business being 'conventional' of a villain. Many less successful responses analysed the codes and conventions (media language) of the trailer rather than focusing on aspects of representation.

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