

# A LEVEL

*Delivery Guide*

H580

Accredited

# SOCIOLOGY

Theme: Media

June 2015



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# Introduction

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:

- Content: a clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;
- Thinking Conceptually: expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties learners may have, approaches to teaching that can help learners understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;
- Thinking Contextually: a range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected that best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

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## KEY



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AS Level content only

# Curriculum Content

This option focuses on how different social groups are represented in the media, and how the media affects audiences. It is therefore important that learners are given the opportunity to research the way in which the media portrays various ethnic groups, genders and social classes, and how these representations may have changed over time. Learners should also focus on consensus versus conflict perspectives in terms of explaining these representations, as well as the ability of the media to reinforce social order and control. Furthermore, learners ought to explore postmodernist critiques of the other theoretical perspectives.

Additionally, learners should develop an understanding of theoretical views on media effects. Learners ought to explore theoretical models such as hypodermic syringe, two-step flow, cultural effects, and uses and gratifications. This will enable learners to evaluate the extent to which media audiences experience direct and/or indirect effects, or whether they are active participants. Finally, it is necessary that learners understand the potential of the media to amplify deviancy and create moral panics, perhaps through consideration of a classic case study of moral panics.



# Thinking Conceptually

## **Key concepts and approaches to teaching to help learners to understand these concepts**

This topic enables learners to develop their conceptual awareness of core themes such as socialisation, social control, culture and identity. Specifically, learners will be introduced to the concepts of media representations, deviance amplification, moral panics and media effects. After a consideration of the ways in which the media has shaped their own impressions of social groups, it would be appropriate for learners to conduct their own sociological research in order to build their knowledge and understanding of the concepts. One such task could be to undertake a content analysis of one form of media to examine how women, for example, are represented. Similarly, once learners have developed knowledge of sociological theories, they could deepen their understanding by carrying out role plays, or by writing an 'agony aunt' style letter from a given perspective. In essence, a skills-based, active-learning approach seems to be suitable for the sociological study of media.

## **Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have**

For many learners, this is the first time they will have studied sociological theory. Therefore it is suggested that learners study the key ideas of each theory before they try to apply the theoretical perspectives to assessing media representations.

Furthermore, it is advisable to discuss with the learners the sheer scale and variety of media – most will be highly familiar with some forms of media, so will need to learn to 'step back' and use sociological imagination to view the media critically rather than see its representations/effects as inevitable.

## **Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set learners up for topics later in the course**

Learners will already have covered an introduction to concepts such as socialisation, culture, subculture, identity (ethnic, national, age, gender, social class), and social control in section A of Component 01. Therefore this topic provides a prime opportunity to reinforce these topics. Additionally, this topic will provide the foundations for future sections of the specification, such as content analysis, which is necessary for 'Research Methods and Researching Social Inequalities' (Component 02). This suggests that it is beneficial to include some initial methodological evaluative points, using concepts like 'representativeness' and 'validity'. Furthermore, later topics will consolidate the theoretical perspectives (e.g. Marxism and feminism), as well as social groups such as class, ethnicity, gender and age in 'Understanding Social Inequalities' (Component 02) and in the Component 03 options of 'Crime and Deviance', 'Education' and 'Religion, Belief and Faith'.



# Thinking Contextually

## 1. How are different social groups represented in the media?

Learners could grasp opportunities to use contemporary news articles to exemplify how different social groups are represented in the media. For example, media coverage of political and social concern regarding immigration and terrorism to demonstrate representations of ethnic groups. This could include the negative connotations attached to Eastern European migrants and North African asylum-seekers by some media outlets, as well as the contribution of the media to Islamophobia. However, learners ought to be encouraged to consider a wide range of media contexts, not just the news. For the study of how the media differentiates between young and old, or feminine and masculine for example, it would be interesting for learners to undertake a comparison of cartoons, documentaries, billboard advertising and other types of

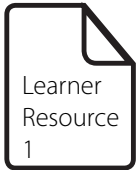
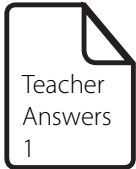
media. In addition, a historical context ought to be studied, with learners developing an understanding of how the media represented social groups in the past and how this has changed.

## 2. What effect do the media have on audiences?

In terms of evaluating media effects theories, classic case studies of moral panics (such as Cohen's Mods and Rockers) as well more recent examples like the association of horror films with the murder of James Bulger could be used. Additionally reference could be made to social networking and blogging as forms of audience participation, and learners could research which 'box sets' have been successful and which failed in order to evaluate audience effects on the media.

Activities	Resources
<p><b>Activity 1: Starter activity to introduce how the media affects our perceptions – Statistics Guessing Game</b></p> <p>Display the following questions on the whiteboard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) What % of the population is Muslim?</li><li>2) What % of the population are immigrants?</li><li>3) What % of social security is claimed fraudulently?</li><li>4) What % of social security goes to the unemployed?</li><li>5) More taxpayers' money is spent on Jobseekers Allowance than pensions: true or false?</li></ol> <p>Learners can either use mini-whiteboards to hold up their answers, or simply write them down and then feedback verbally at the end.</p> <p>Compare guesses to the reality by displaying the graphic at: <a href="http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2014-09-28/how-media-controls-britain">http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2014-09-28/how-media-controls-britain</a></p> <p>Discuss which forms of media might have caused these unrealistic perceptions e.g. news, documentaries, soap operas, advertising. Encourage learners to suggest specific examples.</p>	<div>▶ Click here</div>

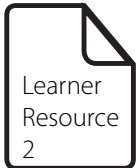
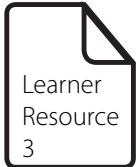
# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>Activity 2: Group, pair or individual activity to introduce media representations – Collage research project</b></p> <p>This could work as a large display activity or learners could produce smaller, individual versions.</p> <p>Allocate learners a social group e.g. a social class, an ethnic group, a gender or a British nationality.</p> <p>Learners use newspapers, magazines, leaflets, and internet searches to find images and key words that are commonly used in the media to represent that social group.</p> <p>Learners then arrange these onto a collage, and write a 200 word summary of the findings, conclusion and evaluation.</p>	
<p><b>Activity 3: Small group activity to demonstrate how media representations of gender change over time – Women in the media timeline</b></p> <p>Provide each group with a pack of images (see Learner Resource 1) of women aged 20–30 from various points over the last century or so.</p> <p>Learners try to arrange the images into a timeline, first putting them in order of oldest to most recent, then trying to estimate the decade that each image is from.</p> <p>Learners could do this by placing or sticking the images on to A3 paper, then annotating around them.</p> <p>The task could be differentiated by providing low ability learners with fewer images, or with extra cards with the decades printed on, so it becomes more of a card-sort activity.</p> <p>Each group should then draw up a table summarising the similarities and differences in how the ways femininity has been portrayed in the media over time.</p> <p>Extension: learners to discuss how feminists and postmodernists would explain why these changes have happened, and whether they are positive or negative changes.</p>	<div data-bbox="1742 730 1877 900">  <p>Learner Resource 1</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1742 940 1877 1109">  <p>Teacher Answers 1</p> </div>





# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>Activity 4: Individual, pair or small group content analysis to demonstrate how the media represents different ethnic groups</b></p> <p>Learners will need a broadsheet newspaper, a tabloid, a women's magazine and a men's magazine.</p> <p>Each group should be allocated one ethnicity to conduct a content analysis on. This task can be differentiated by allowing more able learners to construct their own categories, whereas other learners can be supported by being providing with a readymade tally chart (an example of a tally chart for this activity is provided).</p> <p>Once learners have looked through the media resources and completed their content analysis, they should condense their results into a conclusion of 3–5 bullet points. This could then be presented to the whole class, with all learners completing a summary sheet (see below).</p> <p>An extension task could see learners evaluating the methodology they used/designed.</p> <p>Learner Resource 2 Sheet 1: content analysis tally sheet; Sheet 2: class feedback table and final conclusions sheet (teacher to collect appropriate forms of printed media).</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 2</p>
<p><b>Activity 5: Small group activity to consolidate media effects models – learners become 'Agony Aunts'</b></p> <p>Learners are given a letter from a parent worried about their 13 year old son watching shows with adult content, such as 'Breaking Bad'.</p> <p>Each small group is allocated a model (hypodermic syringe model, two step flow model, cultural effects model, uses and gratification model), the task is to write a reply explaining how the media might affect the boy in question (according to their allocated model) and provide advice on how the parents should deal with this situation.</p> <p>All groups should then present their letters to the whole class.</p> <p>Learner Resource 3: Task letter from worried parents, media effects models information sheet.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 3</p>



# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>Activity 6: Odd one out activity for media effects models – suitable as a plenary or starter for the next lesson</b></p> <p>Learners are given sets of concepts. In each set, two of the three concepts have a clear connection to each other, meaning the third one is the odd one out.</p> <p>Learners are asked to discuss each set of concepts, identify the odd one out, and then be able to justify their decision to the rest of the group.</p> <p>There aren't necessarily any wrong answers to this task; the purpose is to encourage learners to give a sociological justification for their decision. However, suggested answers are provided for the teacher.</p> <p>Learner Resource 4: Odd one out sets of concepts and suggested answers.</p>	<div>Learner Resource 4</div> <div>Teacher Answers 2</div>
<p><b>Activity 7: Moral panics and deviancy amplification introductory activities</b></p> <p>Learners are to use a textbook or notes from the teacher to read about moral panics and deviancy amplification, with reference to the work of Jock Young and Stanley Cohen.</p> <p>Teachers may wish to use to use a source such as <a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20100418152538/http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/hrb9701.html">http://web.archive.org/web/20100418152538/http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/hrb9701.html</a> if textbooks are not available.</p> <p>Learners should first determine definitions of the following concepts: moral panic, deviancy amplification and folk devils.</p> <p>Next they can choose to either draw out a flowchart (deviancy amplification spiral) or to summarise in no more than 150 words how the media can create moral panics and amplify deviancy.</p> <p>Finally, learners work in small groups to write four statements about the topic: three true and one false. They present them to the class (perhaps by writing them on mini-whiteboard or in marker pen on A3 paper), and the rest guess which is false.</p>	<div>Click here</div>



# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>Activity 8: Individual, pair or group activity to consolidate learning of whole unit – dominoes</b></p> <p>Cut around the dotted lines of Learner Resource 5, to create 26 dominoes.</p> <p>Each group will need their own set, or the activity can be done as a whole class with each learner holding one card (or more if there are more dominoes than learners), and standing up when they hear the key concept/theory that is being defined on the left hand side of their own card.</p> <p>They then read out their domino, to see who has the definition for the key concept/theory on the right hand side of their card.</p> <p>Continue until all dominoes have been used.</p> <p>The dominoes are in the correct order on the resource. Therefore, the bottom right domino ('media representations') will link to the definition on the top left domino.</p> <p>Learner Resource 5: Dominoes and answer sheet.</p>	<p>Learner Resource 5</p> <p>Teacher Answers 3</p>



# Learner Resource 1 Activity 3

See  
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## Learner Resource 1 Activity 3

**1890s**

**1920s**

**1940s**

**1950s**

**1960s**

**1970s**

**1980s**

**2010s**



# Learner Resource 2 Activity 4 – Sheet 1



**Instructions for learners:** You will need a selection of printed media resources to carry out a content analysis i.e. a study of how an allocated ethnic group is represented in the media.

**Note down your allocated ethnic group here** .....

**Task one:** Look at each of the forms of media and every time you see an article which mentions a person of the ethnicity stated above, tick the appropriate row in the tally to show how the person was described (tick more than one if applicable).

Description	Tally	Total
Occupation – white-collar, managerial, professional		
Occupation – blue-collar, unskilled or semi-skilled, manual		
Unemployed		
Young (below 20 years)		
Middle-aged or adult		
Old (above 60 years)		
Male		
Female		
Appearance – positive		
Appearance – negative		
Attitude or behaviour – positive		
Attitude or behaviour – negative		
Other – positive		
Other – negative		

**Task two:** Summarise your results into three to five concluding bullet-points (e.g. how this ethnic group is typically represented by these forms of media).

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# Learner Resource 2 Activity 4 – Sheet 2

Each small group will feed back their conclusions on how their allocated ethnicity is represented in the media. Use this summary sheet to record the conclusions of this content analysis for the other ethnic groups:

Ethnic Group	How it's represented in the media

## Final Conclusions:

Does the media stereotype on the basis of ethnicity? Give evidence to support your view.

## Extension Question:

If you were evaluating this research method, what would you see as the strengths and weaknesses of it?





# Learner Resource 3 Activity 5



You are the Agony Aunt at a magazine called *Parenting Today*. You receive the following letter:

“Dear Agony Aunt,

My husband and I are currently struggling to know whether it’s acceptable to let our 13 year old son watch the television programmes that he and his friends seem so fond of. We recognise that he is below the recommended age for many of these shows, such as ‘Breaking Bad’ and ‘The Walking Dead’. However, he has struggled to fit in with the other children at school in the past, and we think that if we ban these programmes, he will not be able to join in with his friends’ conversations. He is quite mature for his age, and generally well-behaved, but might these programmes affect his behaviour in future? Should we ban him from watching them?

Yours Sincerely,

Worried Parents.”

Your task:

- You will be allocated a media effects theory.
- You need to write a reply explaining how the media might affect the boy in question (according to your allocated model) and provide advice on how the parents should deal with this situation.
- Aim to write 150 words.
- All groups should then present their letters to the whole class.

Use the Information Sheet that follows to help you with this task.





# Learner Resource 3 Activity 5

## Information Sheet on Media Effects Models

**Instructions to learners:** use this information sheet to help you to complete the 'agony aunt' letter-writing task.

Media Effects Model	Explanation	Example	Evaluation
Hypodermic syringe model	An early theory developed by sociologists when radio and newspapers were first starting to become an everyday part of society. This model uses an analogy: that the media is capable of injecting ideas into people's minds, in the same way that a syringe can directly inject drugs. In other words, the audience is passive and the media is a powerful and direct influence on society.	James Bulger murder – Venables is said to have watched the horror film 'Halloween' in the weeks leading up to the murder, and drawn pictures of children being murdered, as per the film.	Of the millions of people who watch horror films, the vast majority do not go on to mimic the scenes in the films.
Two step flow model	This model contests the idea that the media influences all people directly. Instead, it suggests that audience members develop an opinion on the media, and some of these become 'opinion leaders', who express their views to others. For example in a workplace setting, colleagues may discuss a television series, and these discussions affect their understanding of that series.		
Cultural effects model	This is the view that the audience is not a homogenous group who are all affected in the same way by the media. Instead, a person's culture will affect their interpretation of media messages. For example, some audience members may be angered by the violence in traditional cartoons such as Tom and Jerry, whereas others will see it as humorous.		
Uses and gratification model	A functionalist model that suggests that the media has a function: meeting people's individual needs. This view suggests that the audience is active, and each person chooses the media they experience to meet their individual needs, e.g. the elderly may be more likely to use the media for current affairs, whereas teenagers see it as having more of an entertainment function.		

**Extension:** Using your own knowledge and/or internet research, find an example that supports each model, e.g. a news story. Then add a criticism of the model to be used as evaluation. The first row has been done for you as an example.



# Learner Resource 4 Activity 6



Look at the following sets of concepts. Your task is to identify which two are linked, and thus which one is the 'odd one out'. Warning: you need to be able to justify your decision!

SET 1	PASSIVE	INDIRECT	HYPODERMIC SYRINGE
SET 2	TWO STEP FLOW	OPINION LEADERS	CULTURAL EFFECTS
SET 3	CENSORSHIP	USES AND GRATIFICATIONS	FUNCTIONALISM



# Learner Resource 5 Activity 8

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## CULTURAL EFFECTS MODEL

The view that the audience passively accepts all ideas that the media presents: they are directly influenced by the media.

## USES AND GRATIFICATION MODEL

The view that the media often influences people indirectly, e.g. 'opinion leaders' react to a TV programme and others follow their lead.

## ETHNICITY

Socially constructed expectations of the behaviour, appearance, etc of men and women.

## IMMIGRANT

A set of attributes traditionally associated with men, which are taught during socialisation e.g. being strong.

## HYPODERMIC SYRINGE MODEL

The ways in which the media presents a social group, e.g. women as feminine or teenagers as troublesome.

## TWO STEP FLOW MODEL

The view that a person's culture will affect how they interpret the media.

## GENDER

The view that the audience is active, and each person chooses the media they experience to meet their individual needs.

## MASCULINITY

A social group who have a shared culture and common identity differentiating them from other social groups.



# Learner Resource 5 Activity 8

<p>NATIONALITY</p> <p>A set of attributes traditionally associated with women, which are taught during socialisation, e.g. being caring.</p>	<p>STEREOTYPE</p> <p>A socio-economic classification that is often based on occupation.</p>	<p>WISIX-MARX-NEO</p> <p>These sociologists believe that the media is controlled by the bourgeoisie and used to maintain its power over the proletariat.</p>	<p>FEMINISM</p> <p>These sociologists argue that we are living in a diverse society, and media content reflects this.</p>
<p>FEMININITY</p> <p>A person who resides in a country different from the one in which they were born.</p>	<p>SOCIAL CLASS</p> <p>A person's legal citizenship of a country, e.g. being Scottish.</p>	<p>MARXISM</p> <p>Generalisations (often inaccurate) about a social group which are sometimes reinforced by the media.</p>	<p>PLURALISM</p> <p>These sociologists believe that the media is used to shape hegemony by presenting ruling class ideas as common-sense and obvious.</p>



# Learner Resource 5 Activity 8

PATRIARCHY

These sociologists dispute claims that there is a dominant set of ideas within the media: there is choice. Identity now comes from consumption, not social class.

REGULATION

A Marxist key concept that suggests that the masses cannot see the reality of society, as they are socialised into a set of false ideas.

FOLK DEVIL

The way that media may have the ability to cause society to become overly concerned about an issue.

DEVIANCE AMPLIFICATION

The process by which individuals learn the norms and values of their society, e.g. via the media, family or education.

POSTMODERNISM

These sociologists argue that the media is used as a form of social control over women by spreading patriarchal ideology.

FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS

Male dominance: a feminist key concept.

MORAL PANIC

The ways in which the media is checked, censored or controlled e.g. by the government.

SOCIALISATION

A social group that is scapegoated by the media as the cause of society's problems.



# Learner Resource 5 Activity 8

## MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS

Methods used to encourage people to conform to society's norms and values, e.g. the media presenting some behaviours as normal and others as deviant.

## SOCIAL CONTROL

The way the media may have the ability to increase a social issue, e.g. Mods/ Rockers riots.



# Teacher Answers 1 Activity 2

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1890s: Victorian housewife



1920s: Flapper girl



1940s: Munitions worker



1950s: Domestic goddess



1960s: Equal pay demonstrators



1970s: Fashion victim



1980s: Business woman



2010s: Pop star

## Teacher Answers 2 Activity 6



SET 1	PASSIVE	INDIRECT	HYPODERMIC SYRINGE	HS model sees audience as being passive and directly influenced by what they see in the media.
SET 2	TWO STEP FLOW	OPINION LEADERS	CULTURAL EFFECTS	TSF argues that individuals' views about media content are shaped by opinion leaders, whereas cultural effects theory argues it is shaped by our background.
SET 3	CENSORSHIP	USES AND GRATIFICATIONS	FUNCTIONALISM	U&G is a functionalist model that suggests that the media has a function: meeting people's individual needs. This does not take into account censorship.





## Teacher Answers 3 Activity 8

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