# Curriculum planner ‒ Two year approach

### Introduction

The year plan outlined in these materials intends to provide a series of learning opportunities whilst enabling progression from year one to year two of the A level. It aims to address the content of the components in a way that should be manageable for students and introduce skills they must acquire and develop as the course progresses. It is suggested that the course begins with a thorough induction,which introduces students at a basic level to the key theoretical frameworks as well as issues they may encounter, alongside an introduction to the analytical and practical skills required over the two-year course. This approach is also pragmatic in terms of accommodating student ‘movement’ across subject choices at the beginning of the course and allowing time for classes to ‘settle’ and fully engage in the subject.

On first glance, the plan suggested here may imply that the majority of the A level content is addressed in year one. But, it is intended that candidates learn the component topics in year 12 with detailed analysis and focus on the case study texts for each component. In year two of the A level, these components are revisited but this time with focus on the academic ideas and arguments that students are required to understand for the ‘in depth’ topics of News and Long-Form TV Drama. This enables the development of skills; knowledge and understanding; addresses the need for progression; provides many opportunities for revision of case study texts and introduces academic ideas and arguments when students may feel more able to apply these ideas successfully to case studies they have learned. This also addresses the synoptic requirement.

This plan suggests that the NEA is begun at the end of year one of the A level and completed by the autumn half term in year two of the course. Centres are advised to allow seven weeks in total for the actual construction of the cross-media products. Structuring the year plan in this way provides time for research and planning together with a remake activity, which can be completed at end of the summer term in year one of the course. This should provide candidates with ample time to develop ideas and planning as a summer homework activity and allow continuity from years one to two of the A level.

(Alternatively, teachers may prefer to break up the research and planning of each practical task separately, so that students complete the research and planning for the main moving image task and then complete the construction. This would be followed by research, planning and construction of the online tasks.)

It is important for students to be provided with opportunities to complete short non-assessed practical activities in their learning during year one of the course to acquire and develop practical skills that will enable confident and creative coursework outcomes in year two. Centres are encouraged to consider how practical elements can be integrated into schemes of work for the exam units to develop or assess knowledge and understanding of media language and constructed representations, whilst developing necessary practical skills. In doing so, a variety of learning styles and preferences can be addressed whilst making the course enjoyable for students and teachers alike.

In the plan provided here, the exam units are revisited for the duration of the spring term in year two of the A level. This is only a suggestion and teachers may need to reflect on their year plans after teaching in year one of the course to address any issues with components or topics that may require more development than others in year two.

Teachers may also want to consider how they assess student knowledge, understanding and progression. The plan provided here suggests a ‘light’ mock for each component as it is completed.

It is important to note that this is only a proposed way through teaching the A Level. It isn’t the intention to suggest that Centres must follow this plan in order to be successful. This plan is intended to illustrate one way to deliver the components over the two-year course. There are many routes and centres are encouraged to reflect on good practice and develop their year plans and schemes of work in light of previous successful approaches, the resources available to them and, of course, their students’ academic needs and abilities. Centres might also like to examine the ‘Three Alternative Models’ document as well.

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Autumn term first half** | **Induction to the course**  Students begin the course with a thorough induction that focuses on themed lessons around the four key theoretical concepts. The induction is a way to encourage students to settle into the course whilst completing a range of activities that can provide an introduction to the topics, skills and concepts required for study over the two year course and serves as a reflection point when introducing each of the exam components over the course of the A Level.  Centres are encouraged to set up a cohort blog on platforms like Weebly, Wix or WordPress, where they can document their learning and understanding over the two year course and refer back to for revision. This could be set up in the very first lesson.  First lesson: Introduction to the course and ice breakers. Complete an introduction ‘this is me’ post to their Media blog/ website.  Then the following activities could be used over this first half term, looking at one area of the theoretical framework a week.  ***Media Industry – timelines***   * Introduce the history of media and its traditional institutions by looking at film, radio, television, newspaper, magazines and advertising by asking students to make a media timeline. Reflect on the development of different media forms and industries. |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Autumn term first half** | * Introduce contemporary media Institutions by looking at the music industry, video games, online media and social and participatory media. Encourage students to reflect on their own media consumption and identify key global media online brands such as Google, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter etc. Students could add this to their historical timeline. * Encourage students to make some conclusions about the evolution of the media industries from offline to online. You may want to very briefly introduce some ideas about the mass media and power from Curran and Seaton and invite students to make some very general conclusions about institutional power, the different platforms media products are consumed on and by whom.   ***Media Language – how meaning is constructed***  Compare more traditional media texts such as a front page of a newspaper article with a clip from a reality TV show such as Made in Essex and a Facebook profile – ask students which is constructed? Encourage students to develop an understanding that all media texts are constructed through the use of specific media language relevant to different media forms and genre conventions – introduce key terminology at a very basic level with some introduction to textual analysis of a variety of straightforward media texts with a focus on the following as appropriate:   * genre and narrative * camera and editing * sound (including speech, music and sound effects) * image/mise-en-scène * writing and typography   ***An introduction to practical activity***  Provide students with an early opportunity to acquire practical skills in planning, construction and post- production. This can be a very short activity to familiarise students with practical equipment and to practise constructing some elements of media language – for instance, the filming of ‘passing a package’ or producing the front cover of a new college magazine or recording a podcast about an aspect of the history of the media. Students can complete a ‘preliminary’ style activity in one week where they research, plan and produce a small media text, with time for some class feedback at the end. Other planning and construction activities are built in throughout the first year, to develop the skills base needed for the NEA.  ***Audience –*** *types, likes and effects*   * Introduce ideas of what makes up an audience and different types of audiences. Students should be encouraged to begin to think about how audiences are categorised and what the different audience types for different media texts might be. Students can use websites such as [www.YouGov.co.uk](http://www.YouGov.co.uk/) to develop a basic understanding of audiences and audience profiling. * Groups of students to take one of the following RAJAR, NRS, BARB, ABC etc and find out how they classify audiences and how the information about who is consuming their respective media products is used by each industry. Feed back to class. * Introduce ideas around audience effects: what the media does to us, what we do with the media. Students can develop some independent research skills by completing a brief audience research task asking audiences what they think about the effects of the media with some primary research and create a Survey Monkey to document their findings. Students can present their research findings and, if appropriate, apply some very basic academic ideas about different types of audiences and media effects making some conclusions as to whether we are passive or active audiences?   ***Representation –*** *stereotypes, beliefs and values*   * Introduce the terms representation, identity and then ideology and notions of social power could be introduced in a basic context. * Practise analysis of the representation of different groups, for example gender and age, across different texts such as newspaper articles, TV dramas, music videos; compare and contrast the representations encouraging students to make some early conclusions about how they look, the media form used, who the representations are made by and the audiences they are for. * Set groups to consider how they might construct a range of representations in, for example, a new TV drama and a new women’s magazine. |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Autumn term second half** | **PAPER 1 Media Messages SECTION A – News**  **Two linked in-depth studies focusing on contemporary news**  For this component students will currently need to study an edition of *The Daily Mail* and *The Guardian* from the same date, together with their websites and their associated social and participatory media (Mail Online, Guardian website, and the Twitter, Facebook and Instagram feeds that link from the websites). The case study must cover all four areas: **Industries**, **Audiences**, **Language** and **Representations**  In addition to the case studies, students will have unseen newspapers to analyse in the exam, so they need to study the wider news market, not just the case studies, so that would be a good place to start:  Context - British newspapers   * Take a range of national newspapers (and perhaps a local and/or regional) from the same day and analyse, compare and contrast in terms of genre (form, content, language [mode of address, copy and typography]; use of images); readership; and methods of targeting. The website [http://www.thepaperboy.com/uk/](http://www.thepaperboy.com/uk) has a range of front covers, an article archive, circulation figures and other useful material. * Compare representations from each newspaper; compare how the same event, issue, individual or social group is represented . Discuss possible reasons for the differences. Discuss the ways in which realism is constructed and how that affects representations. * Use ABC and the Newspaper Society as starting points to find out who reads the newspapers (does it match your analysis?) and see if you can find if they have changed over the last 5 or 10 years. Use the same sites to find out who owns the newspapers (and what else they own). * Look at the political context the newspapers are produced in – how does that affect their ownership, content and regulation. * Consider how technology has impacted on media language, for instance through the post-production editing of photos. * Look at the online versions and their social and participatory media. Research their history – are there figures to show increasing use of these platforms? Investigate why there might have been a change. How are the online platforms paid for?   Case Studies – *The Daily Mail* and *The Guardian*   * Choose an edition of each paper from the same day – put to one side for a later lesson. * On the same day, save or screenshot key pages from each paper’s website, including the homepage and at least two others to show the scope, scale, content and appeal. You could screen shot at two different times to see how things might have changed over the day. If possible get students to gather this evidence too. You will need at least two articles from each that link to the themes or issues represented on the front covers you have chosen. * Also on the same day, gather evidence from the two paper’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds (take screen shots for long term evidence but also get students to note how active the participation is and which articles generate most audience participation. * Study and analyse each paper and digital format as you did for the other papers above (comparing genre, language, representation, readership, ownership, economic factors, political context and regulation) but in more detail, looking at the whole of each newspaper, rather than selected pages. Consider carefully the way events, issues, individuals and social groups are represented through selection and the difference that ownership may have on that selection process. This is a useful resource <https://www.theguardian.com/gnmeducationcentre/resources-for-teachers> * Consider any positive and negative representations and how they may invoke discourses and ideologies and position audiences. * Look at convergence. Consider the relationship between technological change and the production, distribution and circulation of each product. * Consider the ways paper-based and digital forms might appeal to different audiences. Do they serve different functions? Do different audiences use and interpret the same content in different ways?   Include some practical work at this point (e.g. storyboarding a TV advert for each of the two newspapers, or producing the front cover of a new local newspaper). This should build up the skills base for the NEA.  Teachers may want to assess understanding and knowledge of News with a ‘light’ mock, including questions based on the case studies and with some unseen material from two other newspapers.  ***This component will be revisited in year two of the A level, when the focus will be the revision of the case studies and application of the specified academic ideas and arguments.***  **PAPER 1 Media Messages SECTION B – Media Language and Representation**  Section B is based on set media products for each of the following forms: Advertising and Marketing, Music Videos and Magazines. The work on each of these set products should centre on **Media** **Language** and **Representation**.  **Advertising and Marketing**  Bring in a range of print advertisements (or source some online - <http://www.advertisingarchives.co.uk/> is very useful or <http://adsoftheworld.com>; a small historical archive is held online at <http://www.hatads.org.uk>). You could include fashion, beauty products, charities. Consider selecting them in groups of representations – a group of advertisements representing children; gender; an issue; an event; or a nation or region, for example.   * Analyse codes and conventions of layout, typography, photography, mise en scène, taglines * How do the combination of these elements influence meaning? Is there more than one meaning? Is there any intertextuality – if so how does that affect meaning? * Discuss the representations constructed in the advertisements: who is being represented; what are the messages they communicate ; how are audiences positioned? Think about how the meaning might be subverted by different audiences. Compare different advertisements representing the same individual, group, place, event or issue. * Research task using <http://www.advertisingarchives.co.uk/> - are any groups under represented? Why? * Look at specific advertising techniques such as persuasion, endorsement, neologisms, emotive language, command headlines, reward headlines; consider the power and meaning of colour. There are a number of useful and lively online resources, as well as the established textbooks on the subject. (Try <http://blog.visme.co/visual-advertising-techniques/>) Create some advertisements to understand from the inside how print advertisements work, combining language and representations to sell products or ideas. * Now choose a group of advertisements for the same sort of product but over a period of time - how does the historical context affect the approach taken? (Consider social changes; commercial, legal and political pressures; changes over time in terms of values attitudes and beliefs) How might audience responses to the representations constructed change over time? * *Finally study the three set advertisements which are available below:* * ***River Island ‘Smooth Moves Only’, Labels are for Clothes campaign*** (2018) * ***Dove ‘Too Many Cooks’, Beautifully Real Moms campaign*** (2018) * Available at the below link. * <https://sites.wpp.com/wppedcream/2018/-/media/wppedcream/2018/projects/beautifully-real-moms/too-many-cooks.jpg?mw=1200&hash=B6B8C5E060A659AB18913B4F59C8EDCD> * ***Shelter***(2011)     Analyse the three advertisements in a similar manner to the practice ones but in more detail, considering language; codes and conventions; advertising techniques; how the representations are constructed; how messages might be interpreted differently by different audiences; the influence of the social and cultural context. Compare and contrast the two advertisements.  It’s a good idea to build in some practical work at this point, creating a print-based advertising campaign for a new product, for instance, and considering the construction of representation, codes and conventions. This activity should embed understanding of the exam topic and develop the skills needed if they are going to work in print for the NEA. Extension work could include considering how the campaign might be developed in other media (and even producing a web-based advert and/or a TV advert and/or a radio advert, which would develop other production skills).  Teachers may now want to assess understanding and knowledge of Advertising and Marketing with a ‘light’ mock. |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Spring term first half** | **PAPER 1 Media Messages SECTION B – Media Language and Representation continued**  **Magazines**  Investigate the magazine market in the UK, looking at niche and mass magazines aimed at a range of audiences; weekly and monthly; special interest and lifestyle. Look at the shared codes and conventions and the representations on the front covers. Discuss the effects of the following, both separately and how they work together:   * Mise en scène (locations, costumes, makeup, props, body language and facial expression) * Photography (camera angle, shot size, focus, lens) and lighting * Layout * Colour * Typography including masthead, sell lines, plugs, puffs * Written language and mode of address * Intertextuality   How does the cover communicate to the audience? How does it appeal?  What are the social, cultural or political contexts for each magazine and how do they affect the language and the representations?  How might different audiences respond to each front cover? Consider the target audience’s possible reading and then compare with an audience that might give a different reading. Why might they respond differently.  Now select two front covers from *The Big Issue* (see Specification for the rules around issue dates). The covers you choose should construct representations that are alternative to the commercial, mainstream ones studied so far; they should also cover issues or events that are of national significance so that students are equipped to respond comfortably to any question centred on the social, cultural or political context of the magazine.  Analyse the two covers, considering all the bullet points and questions above.  Research the institutional background to *The Big Issue*; does it add anything to your understanding of the representations constructed or the issues covered?  You may have time to build in some practical work at this point, perhaps designing the front cover of a new non-mainstream magazine aimed at young people, considering the construction of representation of young people and/or issues as well as the codes and conventions. This should embed understanding of the exam topic but also develop the skills needed if they work in print for the NEA.  Teachers may now want to assess understanding and knowledge of Magazines with a ‘light’ mock.  **PAPER 1 Media Messages SECTION B – Media Language and Representation continued**  **Music videos**  Choose a range of music videos to do some initial research of genre conventions and representations. You could initially look at the complete list of set music videos (see below) or you could choose some of your own.   * Analyse the videos in terms of the use of media language and the construction of representations, considering: * narrative structures * camerawork, shot sizes, angles, focus and movement * editing transitions, pace, synching, colour correction * mise en scène, including locations, costumes, make up, props, lighting – and performance * intertextuality * social, cultural and historical contexts * What differences are there between the music videos? Are there any differences between genres? * Move on to analysing in more detail ONE video from list A and ONE from list B, as specified in the Specification, considering all the bullet points above.  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **List A** | **List B** | | * *Corinne Bailey Rae – Stop Where You Are* | * *Sufjan Stevens - Sugar* | | * *Lil Nas X – SUN GOES DOWN* | * *Radiohead – Burn the Witch* | | * *Emeli Sandé – Heaven* | * *David Guetta – Titanium* |  * Compare and contrast the two videos. How do the representations promote the artist? How might different audiences read the two videos? Apart from the artist, who or what else is being represented and why? * If there is time set a practical task, such as a short lip synching exercise or a remake of a section of one of the videos studied; as stated before, this helps embed the understanding and develop skills for the NEA. * Teachers may now want to assess understanding and knowledge of Music Videos with a ‘light’ mock.   ***Section B topics will be revisited in year two of the A level.*** |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Spring term second half** | **PAPER 2 Evolving Media SECTION A – Media Industries and Audiences**  Section A focuses on **industries** and **audiences**, and is based on set products in Film, Radio and Video Games.  **Film**  This is not a textual analysis component. Work on this topic must focus on industry, as well as the historical and economic contexts.  The set products are both Disney releases, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937)* and *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021)  *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937)   * Show the 1937 film. This is likely to be on DVD so should initiate a discussion about how films were watched in a pre-DVD or even video era. It is one of the most successful films of all time – and was the highest grossing film of all time when it was released. Why? * Investigate the industrial, historical and economic context of Disney production in the 1930s. There are a number of books and articles on this on this topic. * Research articles on the production of the film such as <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/j80DnDLH7L6YbDpmBw72CP/snow-white-and-the-seven-dwarfs-the-full-length-feature-that-nearly-sank-disney> * <https://www.denofgeek.com/movies/disneys-snow-white-the-risk-that-changed-filmmaking-forever/> * There are a few useful YouTube videos on the production, e.g. <https://youtu.be/RZBsA3XdPAM> (or obviously via DVD/Blu-ray extras). * The below links offer information on regulation and marketing. * <https://www.bbfc.co.uk/education/case-studies/snow-white-and-the-seven-dwarfs-1937> * <https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/snow-white-and-the-seven-dwarfs-new-perspectives-on-production-reception-legacy/ch7-dwarfland-marketing-disney-s-folly> * The film largely followed traditional patterns of production, distribution and exhibition/circulation. * Patterns of production - how did Disney production work at this time? How was *Snow White* produced? What was Walt Disney’s personal influence? What sort of jobs were involved in its production? How was production funded? How long did it take to produce? * Technological developments - did the film use any new processes? * How was the film marketed? * How was it distributed – and subsequently circulated? Consider its worldwide circulation. It has had a second life due to VHS, DVD, digital downloads, Disney+ etc. What difference has that made to its success and income generation? There are a couple of brief articles on distribution here <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/distribution/distribution1.html>   *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021)   * Show the film. Consider key scenes and the difference in technological approach and production process. Have a look at the credits – how many more production roles were there compared to the *Snow White*? What sort of jobs were added to produce the film? How long was the production process? * Who commissioned the film? What was the budget ? * What is the exhibition/circulation process? Consider timing and method, domestically and around the world. How was it marketed? * How successful was it in budgetary terms – relate to the wider Disney picture. * *Shang-Chi* is part of the MCU franchise. How has Disney’s acquisition of Marvel in 2009 contributed to their success? * Research articles on the Marvel franchise and the release of *Shang-Chi* such as * <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dawnchmielewski/2021/09/04/from-avengers-to-shang-chi-what-marvel-studios-is-really-worth-to-walt-disney/?sh=65edde796d9c> * <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2021/sep/05/shang-chi-smashes-labor-day-record-us>   <https://www.screendaily.com/news/disney-claims-global-box-office-title-for-seventh-straight-year/5177796.article>  Compare and contrast the two films in terms of production processes, marketing and distribution. Consider vertical integration and convergence. Consider changes in regulation between the two films. |
| **Spring term second half** | **PAPER 2 Evolving Media SECTION A – Media Industries and Audiences continued**  **Radio**  This component will centre on one complete edition of the *BBC Radio One Breakfast Show* chosen by the centre but dating from after September 2017. It must be a standard episode not a feature or an outside broadcast. You are recommended to choose an edition that clearly promotes British music, celebrity interviews, news, quizzes etc. To keep the programme for study beyond the time it is available on iPlayer you could use a program such as WireTap.  This radio text should be covered in terms of media industries (production, regulation and distribution) and audiences and students must consider the economic, political and cultural contexts that influence the industry and its audiences. The following areas of exploration will provide useful starting points for all these aspects:   * What is the production process? Investigate the use of technology at all stages of production. Some useful sources include <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/radio/commissioning/working_with_radio1_1Xtra.pdf> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/entries/245d8ac1-1a4e-3d66-9c93-d80a498105cd>   <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p056kgbh>   * Who is the audience and how do people listen to the show – Bedside alarm clock/radio? Car radio? Kitchen portable? DAB? FM? Computer? Phone? Live? On Demand? Podcast? On their own? With others? The whole programme or a segment? Students could do a Survey Monkey for evidence and add that to Rajar data. * Is the audience mass or niche? How is that audience created? * How does the programme encourage interactivity and social participation? (Get evidence from the programme and the website – and possibly from that Survey Monkey.) What about encouraging young people to be socially (and politically) aware – is there any evidence from within the programme. In 2016 the BBC ran this initiative: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/entries/7b861a7d-d86a-4155-820d-776bd0916777> Is there any evidence of something similar currently? * What ‘spin offs’ are there to encourage audience loyalty outside the programme’s broadcast time? * The BBC is a Public Service Broadcaster - what did that mean originally and what might it mean now. PSB is covered in a range of media textbooks and the BBC defines it here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/corporate2/insidethebbc/whoweare/ataglance> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/whoweare/publicpurposes> * How and why has the BBC had to re-invent itself within those terms? Reithian principals of education, information and entertainment can be seen in the Breakfast Show, but perhaps not in that order. Find examples of where each can be seen. Are there signs of distinctiveness compared to commercial breakfast shows? * The BBC may be publicly funded but still has to keep up audience figures – why? * Who is the audience and how have figures fluctuated over the last few years? There are a number of online news articles about this: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-36974767> * <http://www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/mythbusting-radio-1-losing-500000-listeners-half-story-1971412> and this website: <https://media.info/radio/stations/bbc-radio-1/listening-figures> * The Institute for Public Policy Research published the following document in 2015 with a useful chapter by Siobhan Kelly about the role of BBC Radio in the UK Media landscape: <https://www.ippr.org/files/publications/pdf/BBCs-future_Nov2015.pdf?noredirect=1> (p117) * Think about the competition and changes in audio consumption – how might that have affected the audience figures. Radio 6 is gaining audiences: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2017/bbc-radio-6-music-breaks-record-reach> * How is the BBC Radio 1 Breakfast Show marketed? * The BBC is now regulated by Ofcom – how might that affect the running and content of the Breakfast Show (<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/ofcom-and-the-bbc>) |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Summer term first half** | **PAPER 2 Evolving Media SECTION A – Media Industries and Audiences continued**  **Video Games**  This component will focus on *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*. Students must focus on the game in relation to media industries and media audiences, as well as considering the economic and social contexts that influence the game industry.  *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* was developed and produced by Nintendo and is part of a franchise that has been running since 2001. It grossed an estimated $2 billion in the first year of its release and became the first console game to reach five million sales within a month.  Central to the study is why and how *Animal Crossing* became so successful.  Before doing any secondary research it is worth spending some time looking at gameplay in *Animal Crossing*.  Do some audience research to find out more about who is using *Animal Crossing* – and how they are using it.  Look at the relationship between the game and other Nintendo products. Consider the economics of vertical integration.  Consider distribution – some of these other questions are distribution-related, but pull these findings together as a focus and look at other specific means of (and issues with) distribution. How has technology influenced distribution?  How is *Animal Crossing* marketed? How have YouTube players affected the popularity of the game?  Look at *Animal Crossing’s* use of social media.  What are its main competitors – how is *Animal Crossing* distinctive?  Investigate the PEGI classification relating to the game.  *Animal Crossing* has won several awards, including various BAFTAs – why? What effect might these awards have had on the game.   * Teachers may now want to assess understanding and knowledge of Section A topics with a ‘light’ mock.   ***Section A topics will be revisited in year two of the A level.*** |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Summer term first half** | **PAPER 2 Evolving Media SECTION B – Long Form Television Drama**  This component requires students to study two set long form TV dramas from the list below, drawing together their understanding of the form in relation to **language**, **representations**, **industries** and **audiences** and **must study the relevant theories**. Students must study **one** from the US column and **one** from the European column.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **United States dramas** | **European (non-English language) dramas** | | * *Mr Robot* (Season 1, Episode 1 June 2015) BBFC 15 * *Killing Eve* (Season 1, Episode 1, April 2018) BBFC 15 * *Atypical* (Season 1, Episode 1, August 2017) BBFC 12 * *Stranger Things* (Season 1, Episode 1, July 2016) BBFC 12 | * *Lupin* (Season 1, Episode 1, January 2021) BBFC 15 * *Money Heist* (Season 1, Episode 1, December 2017) BBFC 15 * *Trapped* (Season 1, Episode 1, December 2015) BBFC 15 * *Deutschland 83* (Season 1, Episode 1, October 2015) BBFC 15. |   The focus of the study will be on how long form drama develops storytelling narratives and the representations that can be found in response to the cultural, social and political contexts of the dramas.  A study of this unit could also consider the long form drama as a ‘prime’ genre in terms of production, distribution and circulation.  Considerations for study also include how global and non-English speaking audiences may be targeted and how they access and respond to global and non-English products. Identify how audiences view and access long form drama outside of traditional ‘scheduling’; consider the importance of box sets and platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime as ways in which consuming TV drama series and engaging in story telling globally have evolved to become more accessible for a variety of audiences.  This component consists of two set case study texts for close analysis over several lessons considering the following in each text:   * The idea of storytelling, narrative forms and story streams. * How long form dramas are developing the narrative conventions of storytelling and possibly challenge the popularity of films as storytelling and possibly challenge the popularity of films as storytelling forms. * How the formal conventions used and representations constructed differ as a consequence of social, political and cultural contexts. * How patterns of producing, distributing and consuming stories globally might differ depending on said contexts for producers, distributors and audiences.   **Introduce the unit** with the concept of storytelling and, through general analysis of example clips, make some predictions about long form drama in terms of media language, representations, ownership, patterns of consumption and appeal for global audiences.  **Close analysis of each case study**  Only one episode from each series has been set – not the whole box set! (Although you may want  to dip into other age-appropriate episodes for comparison). Analysis of each text should address:   * **Media language, genre and narrative structures** * **Representations** * **Social, political and cultural contexts** * **Ownership** * **Audiences**   **Media language, genre and narrative structures**   * Examine the language used to make meaning (camera, mise en scène, editing, sound). * Does the language subvert or challenge genre conventions? Is there genre hybridity? * What is distinctive about the form? * A ‘golden age’ of television writing? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtarferDttI> What is the appeal of the form to moving image storytellers? The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland had an initiative to train people to work in the form <http://www.bai.ie/blog/2015/09/02/major-initiative-to-develop-skills-in-long-form-tv-drama-announced/> The Sundance Institute has this initiative <http://www.sundance.org/programs/episodic-storytelling> * A central feature of these series is narrative complexity <http://mcpress.media-commons.org/complextelevision/complexity/> but is that at the expense of being able to enjoy a single episode? <http://entertainment.time.com/2012/02/21/serial-killers-are-hbo-style-dramas-ruining-the-tv-episode/> * Does the episode make use of intertextuality? <http://uproxx.com/sepinwall/stranger-things-creators-explain-it-all-about-season-1/> ; <http://time.com/4436008/stranger-things-netflix-references/>   **Representations**  Look at a range of representations of events, issues, individuals and social groups. The full content is set out on pp 25-26 of the Specification. The following are just an illustration of representational issues you may choose to look at:   * Is it true that LGBT representations are rare in long form drama? <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/features/why-is-television-still-ignoring-gay-lives-9955101.html> * Consider ethnicity (or its absence) and national representations <https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/tv-radio/2016/01/deutschland-83-has-us-rooting-bad-guys-again-what-it-about-east-germany> * What discourses are invoked by the representations? * How do the representations position the audience? * How do the audiences’ social and cultural circumstances affect their response to representations?   **Social, political and cultural contexts**   * How have these formed/informed these dramas. *Deutschland* 83 has a historical setting and explores political themes. How realistic or influential are they? * Consider the isolation of Iceland and how that is shown in Trapped. * How do the themes explored in the series reflect these contexts?   **Ownership** – production, marketing, distribution, circulation and targeting of audiences.   * Is it an independent production or a conglomerate / globally diversified production? * Look at what sort of company originated, produced and distribute the show: cable/satellite/SVoD, public service/commercial etc. * Consider the influence of technological change, including digitally convergent media platforms on the production, marketing, distribution, circulation and exhibition of long form TV drama, especially in a global context. * The budgets for contemporary US long-form TV dramas are very large, so what is the economic appeal to production companies? * Netflix and Amazon have been said to be changing the face of TV, partly through their long form dramas <https://www.screendaily.com/features/how-netflix-amazon-and-hulu-are-transforming-the-tv-business/5116347.article?blocktitle=LATEST-FILM-NEWS&contentID=40562>; <https://www.screendaily.com/news/amazon-acquires-mr-robot-for-uk-germany-austria/5094598.article> * What is the relationship between the film industry and the production of long form dramas? <https://www.screendaily.com/features/afm-2013-market-forces/5063308.article>; <https://www.screendaily.com/zurich/zurich-mr-robot-creator-sees-show-as-a-long-film/5094696.article> * In the UK, members of Amazon Prime can buy an additional subscription to the ‘Nordic Noir and Beyond channel’. * These series have won major awards. What benefits can this have for the owners? * What are the regulatory issues?   **Audiences**   * Consider demographic and technological factors related to consumption. * How do different audiences access and respond to the text (e.g. how do English speaking audiences immerse themselves in a German or Icelandic text; does a domestic audience respond to the programme differently from others, either in audience share or in terms of ‘reading’ the text?) <https://www.screendaily.com/news/kormakurs-trapped-breaks-iceland-tv-records/5098665.article>; <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/feb/17/deutschland-83-wowed-world-germans-dont-like-it> ) * How do audiences watch in such a way that they retain their level of involvement, manage storylines and often large casts of characters? * How has technology affected the way they watch (e.g. binge watching)? <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-33804184>; time shifting; streaming; large TVs; computers <http://www.adweek.com/tv-video/revolt-study-shows-millennials-still-prefer-watching-long-form-content-tvs-164440/>;   How do long form dramas retain their audiences? A very useful resource for this topic is Tim Dam’s presentation for the BFI Media Conference 2016, using Breaking Bad as a case study <http://www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/bfi-long-form-tv-drama-platforms-audiences-breaking-bad-tim-dams-2016-07-v1_0.pdf> This models a starting point for the study of the set texts for this component.  This could be completed with an end of component ‘light’ mock.  ***Section B is a synoptic component and will be revisited in year two of the A level, when the focus of the learning will be the revision of the case studies and application of specified academic ideas and arguments.*** |

| **Year One** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Summer term second half** | **NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT (NEA) – Making Media**  The NEA is based on four set cross-media production briefs to be produced *individually*:   * a television and online cross-media brief * a magazine and online cross-media brief * a radio and online cross-media brief * a music video and online cross-media brief   The detail of the briefs will change annually. The briefs will be released on the OCR website on 1st March for submission the following academic year, giving centres chance to ensure they are properly equipped and giving students the chance to research and plan before the summer holidays. The research and planning will probably take up to 20 hours to undertake (not all of this will be in the classroom, although there were several opportunities in earlier terms to develop skills through practical activities). The production work should take approximately 30 hours and, in this planner, the production process will start in Year 2.  **Preparatory Activities (non-assessed)**  The research and planning components of the NEA are not assessed but students are required to include their research notes and planning materials as part of their NEA Portfolio. Students could provide this evidence digitally or via hard copy portfolios; however, blogs are an excellent way of evidencing both the research and the planning materials (as well as hosting copies of the final productions) and the start of this half term is a good time for the students to set up and begin working on their evidence blogs.  **Research**  Relevant research must be done for both tasks in their chosen brief, covering:   * similar products * the industrial context * audience * Start by getting students to analyse a range of similar products. Consider conventions, language (appropriate to the brief and as listed in the Spec p29), form, genre, intertextuality, etc. How are representations constructed? * Set them to do some audience research; they could do Survey Monkeys, set up focus groups, look at online secondary research from Rajar, ABC, BARB etc, as appropriate to the product. Each task in the brief is always targeted at the same age range, 16-25 year olds. * Students should revisit the industrial contexts for each product (much of this will have been covered earlier in the year) so that they can later plan and produce appropriate products. * Get them to complete ‘remake’ practical activities for the two linked tasks in the chosen brief, encouraging them to consider and replicate the mise-en-scène, camera shots, editing, layout etc of both products. This will aid understanding of the media forms, as well as making them practise the necessary skills in production and post-production.   **Planning**   * Now the students should be ready to develop creative ideas, plan and organise everything they will need for successful production work. Students could be set summer work that requires them to develop their planning for the products in enough detail to be ready to pitch their ideas and plans in the first week back of year two of the A level. * The materials they produce depend on the final product: TV/video work might have a script, storyboards and/or animatic; location planning (and perhaps filming permission); casting/auditions\*; costumes and prop resourcing. Magazines might have flat plans; marked up ‘contact sheets’ from photographic shoots and drafts. Webwork may have layout designs, some logo design and evidence from photographic shoots, as well as drafts. Most radio productions will have scripts. Later planning includes rough cuts for TV, video and radio.   \* *Although the NEA is undertaken (and assessed) individually, students are allowed to make use of un-assessed people (e.g. for acting or operating lighting or sound) as long as the outcome can be assessed as the work of the individual learner.*   * Risk assessments are not requirements for assessment – but are excellent practice! * All evidence should be recorded on the student’s blog (or equivalent), making the summer homework easy to evidence and the research and planning straightforward to access in the first week of year two. |

| **Year Two** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Autumn term first half** | **Non Exam Assessment – Making Media**  **Production – the pitch**  Centres are advised to allow the first seven weeks of Year 2 (or approximately 30 hours) for the production and post-production stages of the cross-media brief. Before the start of year 2, students will have:   * recorded all evidence of their previous research and planning into their evidence trail (possibly in blog format); * completed the summer homework to plan and organise their practical work ready to pitch in the first week of this term.   The pitch should address a number of evidence requirements identified by the teacher, such as the name of the product, a synopsis of the main idea; completed storyboard or flat plans; an audience profile of a target audience member; an outline of key camera and editing ideas, organised use of locations, props and costumes, a production schedule etc. Teachers should use the mark scheme to identify which elements students need to plan for in detail, to ensure they are addressed in the construction of their work. This planning could also be included in the student’s evidence trail.  The pitching period is a good time to address the Statement of Intent  **Statement of Intent**  Learners mustcomplete a Statement of Intent for their cross-media production which has tobe submitted with their production; it is used within the mark scheme (see Section 3f of the specification for more details). It should benefit the students in thinking what precisely they intend the outcome to show and to be.  The Statement of Intent needs to:   * outline the ways in which the learner intends to link their media products to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the digitally convergent nature of their production; * outline the ways in which the learner intends to use the four areas of the media theoretical framework to communicate meaning and meet the requirements of their brief.   Learners must complete the Statement of Intent using approximately 500 words. A template will be provided on the OCR website for guidance.  **Production and post-production**  Now students should be well-enough prepared to start making their two cross-media products.  What they need to do depends on the medium chosen, but some loose guidelines on how to organize the following weeks are:   * **Filming TV and music video tasks.** Depending on resources aim to allow no more than two weeks for the filming of the production. Encourage students to download and review their footage where possible during the filming period; this enables candidates to re-film unsuitable or less successful footage and encourages reflexive learning. Centres may want to consider providing opportunities for the filming and editing to run alongside each other, but would need an appropriate ‘deadline’ for the end of filming to ensure that the editing of the main task is to a good standard, with a number of rough cuts to allow for drafting. Centres should also be considering the best ways to use their available equipment so that all projects are individual. * **Recording of radio task** Similar to the video-based tasks, give a maximum of two-weeks focused time for recording, depending on the task. Students need time to experiment with acoustic space, mic distance, creating spot FX, directing actors vocally, re-recording location sound if there is unwanted background noise, recording wildtrack etc. but the final recording need not be a long process (an hour-long drama takes less than a day to record, professionally, unlike TV). * **Editing of TV, music video and radio tasks.** If editing once the filming/recording process has finished, candidates should have no longer than two weeks to edit their main task. However, they may need tutorials and guidance on using post-production software and centres are advised to have provided opportunities to practice the skills required for the post-production aspects of the coursework well before the editing of the NEA coursework tasks at previous points in the year plan. Students must be given the opportunity to construct at least one rough cut, where they can reflect on their work and identify areas to develop before the final edit deadline, possibly using peer group feedback. * **Production of magazine task.** Hopefully there will already have been opportunities during the previous year to become confident with the appropriate software to layout pages, manipulate images, design mastheads etc. During the four weeks set out for this production, students should be setting up photoshoots, interviewing, selecting and editing photos, writing and editing copy etc, as appropriate to the task set. * **Production of online task.** Students should use the final three weeks of their NEA time in the production and post-production of the online task. Appropriate opportunities for drafting and self-reflection on their progress should be provided. Students are encouraged to refer back to their research and planning as it may have been completed two months earlier! Where a working website is required students do not have to create the site through programme languages – they can use web design templates like Wix BUT they have to create all content themselves and must produce an original design. They also need to acknowledge what software or templates they have used on the cover sheet.   **Portfolio Organisation**  At the end of this half term ensure that all the portfolio requirements are met. Each individual’s portfolio must include:   1. Non-assessed research notes and planning materials to aid the authentication of work (these may be on a blog or in hard copy). 2. The Statement of Intent (on a blog or in hard copy). 3. A cross-media production (on a blog or in one of the universal digital formats outlined in the Specification) – this will be assessed by the teacher (preferably over the coming few weeks to get it ‘out of the way’!). 4. A non-exam assessment cover sheet that clearly indicates the contribution of any unassessed learners used. This should be completed by the teacher.   ***It’s a good idea to mark the NEA at your earliest opportunity!*** |

| **Year Two** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Autumn term second half** | **Introducing Academic Ideas and Arguments**  Studying the academic ideas and arguments directly after the NEA and in the second half of the Autumn term provides lots of time and some flexibility in how it is delivered. This is the first time in the A Level that students are required to learn and apply a range of academic ideas and arguments in detail and therefore there needs to be enough time to enable the learning of academic ideas and arguments, so that they are firstly accessible to students and secondly that students gain confidence in applying them.  A number of different approaches could be taken in delivering this unit but one may be to spend approximately four lessons on each conceptual area.   * Of the three lessons for each concept area, the first two lessons would look at the range of academic ideas and arguments for that concept. For each writer, teachers could provide an idea or quotation that can be interpreted by students. Students should then be encouraged to find several examples from institutional examples they are familiar with. They can also apply the ideas and arguments to their own production work. * The third lesson might have students giving a mini presentation showing how several of the academic ideas might work together in a text of their choice; or you could set up a TV review show format and get students to present clips and talk about how the ideas and arguments can be seen in their clip; or the class could do collaborative reading, each group taking a text written by one academic and then think about how they can share their findings with the rest of the class. * The fourth lesson for the concept could use the examples identified in the previous lessons to practise writing responses with the academic ideas and arguments and coursework examples in an essay. The focus of the lesson would be on essay structures, paragraph planning and triangulating the academic ideas and arguments and examples to show understanding.   With this approach, teachers are continually assessing learning whilst students are revising the academic ideas and arguments examples and practicing essay writing technique.  Teachers may want to further assess learning with a ‘light’ end of unit mock in addition to the assessment suggested with this structure.  Adopting this approach, learning could be structured over the second half of the autumn term in the following way, with approximately one week on each:  **Language**   * Analysis of texts in relation to: genretheory (including **Neale**); semiotics (including **Barthes**); narratology (including **Todorov** and **Lévi-Strauss**); and postmodernism (including **Baudrillard**). * Application of academic ideas and arguments analysis – structuring answers, planning paragraphs, practising writing.   **Representations**   * Analysis of texts in relation to: the theories of representation (including **Hall)**; theories of Identity (including **Gauntlett**); feminist theories (including **Van Zoonen** and **bell hooks**); theories of gender performativity (including **Butler**); theories around ethnicity and post-colonial theory (including **Gilroy**). * Application of academic ideas and arguments analysis – structuring answers, planning paragraphs, practising writing.   **Industries**   * Analysis of texts in relation to: theories around power and media (including **Curran and Seaton;** theories of regulation (including **Livingston and Lunt**); and theories of cultural industries (including **Hesmondhalgh**). * Application of academic ideas and arguments analysis – structuring answers, planning paragraphs, practising writing.   **Audiences**   * Analysis of texts in relation to: theories of media effects (including **Bandura**); cultivation theory (including **Gerbner);** reception theory (including **Hall**); theories of fandom (including **Jenkins**); theories of ‘end of audience’ (including **Shirky**). * Application of academic ideas and arguments and analysis – structuring answers, planning paragraphs, practising writing.   *Centres might want to add other relevant theorists that are not included in the specification, if they think this would aid students’ understanding, but they are not expected in the exam*.  **Contexts**  This may be a time to revisit ideas of social, cultural, political, economic and historic contexts and apply them to some of the texts students have referred to over the last few weeks |

| **Year Two** | **Component/Content** |
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| **Spring term first half** | **Applying Academic Ideas and Arguments to News and Long Form TV drama**  Having studied and begun to apply the theories to a range of texts during the previous half term, now apply them to the two in-depth studies: contemporary **News** in the UK (Paper 1 Section A) and **Long Form Television Drama** (Paper 2 Section B). This naturally also allows for revision  Three lessons per theory area should be enough to allow for sufficient depth of understanding. Unseen practices and mocks of both Paper 1 Section A and Paper 2 Section B will be in the second half of term.  A reminder that the academic ideas and arguments that need to be applied relate to:  **News**   * Language (**Neale, Barthes,Todorov, Levi-Strauss** and **Baudrillard**) * Representations (**Hall, Gauntlett, Van Zoonen, bell hooks, Butler** and **Gilroy**) * Industries (**Curran** and **Seaton, Livingston** and **Lunt** and **Hesmondhalgh**) * Audiences (**Bandura, Gerbner** and **Hall, Jenkins** and **Shirky**) * (and relevant contexts)   **Long Form Television Drama**   * Language (**Neale, Barthes,Todorov, Levi-Strauss** and **Baudrillard**) * Representations (**Hall, Gauntlett, Van Zoonen, bell hooks, Butler** and **Gilroy**) * Industries (**Curran** and **Seaton, Livingston** and **Lunt** and **Hesmondhalgh**) * Audiences (**Bandura, Gerbner** and **Hall, Jenkins** and **Shirky**) * (and relevant contexts)   Set revision activities for both topics as half term homework |

| **Year Two** | **Component/Content** |
| --- | --- |
| **Spring term second half** | **Unseen practices and mocks of Paper 1 Section A and Paper 2 Section B**  During the first week of this half term, spend some time looking at exam technique, including:   * analysis of exam questions * analysis of specimen example * planning exam essay answers and structuring responses * practising writing paragraphs * practising timed writing.   Set a couple of unseen practices for Paper 1 Section A.  Later in the week, depending on lesson length, try to set a full mock of both Paper 1 Section A and Paper 2 Section B  **Revision of Paper 1 Section B**  This plan allocates two weeks of revision time for each of the topics, with opportunities to find and discuss any recent research, articles, etc.  Set a single timed question practice at the end of each topic:   * Magazines * Advertising and Marketing * Music videos |
| **Summer term first half** | **Revision of Paper 2 Section A**  This plan allocates two weeks of revision time for each of the topics, with opportunities to find and discuss any recent research, articles, etc.  Set a single timed question practice at the end of each topic:   * Film * Radio * Video Games   **Final mocks**  Depending on the length of the half term, there should be time now for a final mock of each paper but possibly split in two, if lessons are shorter than the paper length.  This will require adequate time for mock feedback to identify targets for students to address and develop as part of their individual revision programmes before the final examinations.  Depending on individual term length and lesson length the above planner may need some tweaking on order to allow sufficient exam practice and feedback |



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