A LEVEL

Delivery Guide

MEDIA STUDIES

H409
For first teaching in 2017

Component 1:
News and Online Media

Version 1
This guide outlines approaches and ideas, including learner activities for Component 1 News and Online Media.

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 students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students 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 which best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

If you have any feedback on this Delivery Guide or suggestions for other resources you would like OCR to develop, please email resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk

Some sections of this Delivery Guide are adapted from My Revision Notes: OCR A Level Media Studies by Michael Rodgers, ISBN 9781510429215, [https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/mediastudies/ocralevel](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/mediastudies/ocralevel)

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### Sub Topic 1 – Media Industries, theories and contexts

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**DISCLAIMER**

This resource was designed using the most up to date information from the specification at the time it was published. Specifications are updated over time, which means there may be contradictions between the resource and the specification, therefore please use the information on the latest specification at all times. If you do notice a discrepancy please contact us on the following email address: resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk
SUB TOPIC 1

MEDIA INDUSTRIES, THEORIES AND CONTEXTS

Curriculum content

Media industries content includes:

• how news is shaped by how it is produced, distributed and circulated
• the ownership and control of news
• economic factors such as funding for news
• how news industries maintain audiences nationally and globally (covered below under audiences)
• the impact of technological change, especially digitally convergent media platforms, on news
• the role of regulation in news and the impact of digital technologies on regulation
• the effect of individual producers on news
• use and evaluation of the ideas of Curran and Seaton, Livingstone and Lunt, and Hesmondhalgh on media industries
• Social and cultural contexts: embedded expectations of print and online journalism
• Political contexts: the political systems and forces within which the news media industries operate and which they influence, particularly the effect of these on ownership and control and regulation
• Economic contexts: the influence of the economic system on news media industries, including on funding, the profit motive and competition between producers
• Historical contexts: how news industries reflect historical changes across the other contexts.
**Suggested detailed content**

**How news is shaped by how it is produced, distributed and circulated**

**Comparison of print news and online news**

In print news:
- the production of news is in the hands of the newspaper journalists, editors and printers
- distribution of news is by the organisations that send newspapers to newsagents, who have some control over which publications get distributed, but no control over content
- newsagents and other retailers sell the newspapers (circulation)
- it is the producers who control the news content.

In online news, the situation is less clear. Distribution and circulation are combined in websites or social media. There may be many more news producers, including amateurs, whose news may be distributed by social media such as Facebook, who have a great deal of control over which audiences see which news stories, as well as by traditional newspapers operating online.

The dominance of online news means that exclusives have become less valuable as the news cycle has shortened and an exclusive can be picked up by competitors and recycled instantly. Instead, news organisations are relying on formats such as gossip, lifestyle journalism, opinion sections, and sports journalism to minimise risk.

Social media companies are now crucial news gatekeepers, but their relative lack of editorial control means that fake news and clickbait as well as authentic citizen journalism can proliferate. News circulated via social media is more likely to be image-driven than traditional news.

**Influence of contexts**

The economic context: in free market economies print and online journalism is driven by the profit motive (apart from that produced by the public organisations such as the BBC). The flight of advertising revenue from print journalism to online media in the mid-2010s starved journalism of funds. This has led to a decline in expensive journalism such as international news and investigative reporting and a rise in the cheaper alternative, be it opinion, reporting celebrities and public relations events, lifestyle journalism and sport. Marketing departments are much more powerful in all newspapers as profits decline, as they attempt to boost areas that attract advertising (such as travel journalism).

The economic dominance of social media companies who trade in audience attention, often gained through inciting anger or outrage, means that news values are driven by this imperative as well as the need for images.

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**The ownership and control of news**

Newspapers are different from other industries in that they are not usually profitable, but are seen as a means of gaining political and social influence. This means they are more likely than other media forms to be owned by rich individuals rather than conglomerates. News businesses - such as those that own the Mail and Guardian - tend to specialise in newspaper (and sometimes magazine) publishing rather than a range of media.

While there are recently started internet-only news providers such as Buzzfeed, traditional newspapers and broadcasters such as the BBC dominate online news by the power of their authoritative brands.

The contrasting ownership models of the Guardian (via a trust) and the Mail and their differing ethos – the Guardian as a campaigning liberal newspaper and the Mail as a populist mass market newspaper.

**Influence of contexts**

Media plurality is a live political issue. Concentration of ownership is limited by regulators such as the Competition and Markets Authority. This is both a political and economic context: the government has set up this agency as free markets require competition to work effectively.

The role of press freedom in democratic politics gives opportunities but also places limits on the control exercised by owners of newspapers. Newspapers are permitted to be opinionated and politically biased, but serious newspapers should retain editorial freedom, rather than being mouthpieces of their owners. The Leveson Inquiry’s criticism of the close relationship between newspaper owners and politicians may be used as evidence that this context does or does not restrict the influence wielded by owners.
Funding

Comparison of traditional print funding models – advertising and cover price – and diversified sources of funding for online and print news – paywalls, subscriptions, advertising, events, sales, sponsored material, and so on.

Comparison of the Guardian’s supporter strategy – relying on subscriptions and donations from loyal readers as well as advertising – with the Mail’s more traditional reliance on advertising revenue. Advertisers tend to pressure for high volume rather than quality – so there are more stories against which to place their brands. The Mail’s reliance on advertising can be seen in the high volume of news on its website, which is much busier than the Guardian’s.

Influence of contexts

New economic opportunities offered by the internet, e.g. global audiences, are limited by the cultural expectation of free online content.

News industries are subject to the conflict between the economic pressure to insert brands and marketing into editorial content and the cultural context of journalistic ethics that insist on the separation of advertising and editorial.

The cultural esteem given to print publications maintains print editions in the face of increasing cost to income ratios.

The political context of arguments about funding of journalism (e.g. funding from the BBC or from social media companies) may lead to new funding streams.

The impact of technological change on news, especially digital convergent media platforms

Immediacy and audience interactivity in online news influences how news industries sell themselves to audiences and enables synergy between online and print brands (the former bringing immediacy and participation, the latter bringing authority).

Growth of citizen journalism, e.g. use of mobile phone footage by mainstream news outlets, influences conceptions of journalism.

Rapid speeding-up of the news cycle, from a 24 hour rhythm to constant updating of online news.

Soft news and news with attractive visuals are prioritised in online news in comparison to print news, which may affect the structure of news organisations.

Online news offers opportunities as well as new competition for news producers.

The lack of online regulation and editorial control creates issues of disinformation and clickbait.

The funding of news production may have to be revolutionised in order for news to survive.

Influence of contexts

The cultural authority traditionally given to print newspapers has enabled well-established news brands to prosper online - both The Guardian and The Mail are hugely successful as online newspapers because they each carry a strongly established brand identity.
The role of regulation in news and the impact of digital technologies on regulation

The self-regulation of the newspaper industry is illustrated by the competing regulatory bodies – IPSO (the Daily Mail’s regulator) and Impress, and by the refusal of The Guardian to join either.

Social media companies insist that their role is as a platform rather than a publisher and their international nature means they are not (in 2018) subject to regulation.

Influence of contexts

The ideal of ‘press freedom’ reflects the political context of the role of newspapers in the development of an educated electorate in the historical period in which mass democracy developed. Its expression in the freedom of anyone to set up a newspaper reflects the economic context of free market capitalism. These two combine to restrict regulation to legal (e.g. the libel laws) and self-regulatory approaches. One specific political context is the unresolved conflict over the implementation of the recommendations of the Leveson Inquiry – section 40 was not implemented as of 2018.

Political debates about the role of disinformation in online news and the influence of dark advertising (especially political advertising) may lead to some attempts to regulate social media companies, who are already (by 2018) responding to these criticisms in ways that bring them closer to traditional publishers rather than transparent online platforms. Facebook, for example, has recruited staff to filter content and has introduced a system for throwing light on dark political advertising. However, the lack of centralised regulation of social media companies means that different companies have different responses.

The effect of individual producers on news

The Daily Mail had, until 2018, a tradition of strongly expressed views reflecting those of its editor, Paul Dacre, but also the relatively consistent conservative social and political viewpoint of its columnists. Dacre’s rather sudden replacement in September 2018 might be seen as suggesting that his forthright political assertions, particularly over Brexit, might have been seen as harming the brand and unpalatable to its owners. The Guardian, by contrast, tends to adopt a more collegiate style, with editorials and columnists expressing a wider variety of opinions ranging from the left of the Conservative party to the left of the Labour Party.

Influence of contexts

The rise of celebrity culture influences the prominence of the columnist who is a celebrity as well as columnists who write about celebrities. The impact of feminism can be seen in the number of female columnists in both the Guardian (rather more) and the Daily Mail (rather fewer).

Academic ideas and arguments

(See the document www.ocr.org.uk/Images/421658-academic-ideas-and-arguments-factsheet.pdf for the strengths and limitations of each theory.)

Power and media industries – Curran and Seaton

A political economy approach to the media – arguing that patterns of ownership and control are the most significant factors in how the media operate.

Media industries follow the normal capitalist pattern of increasing concentration of ownership in fewer and fewer hands. This leads to a narrowing of the range of opinions represented and a pursuit of profit at the expense of quality or creativity.

The internet does not represent a rupture with the past in that it does not offer a level playing field for diverse voices to be heard. It is constrained by nationalism and state censorship. News is still controlled by powerful news organisations, who have successfully defended their oligarchy.

Application

Studies of concentration of ownership and control will validate this theory.

Examples of diverse opinions (e.g. in online news or non-mainstream print newspapers) would argue against this theory, as would examples of newspapers sacrificing profit for the sake of quality and creativity (e.g. the Guardian refusing to put up a paywall but instead calling for supporters to fund quality journalism).
Regulation – Livingstone and Lunt

Studied four case studies of the work of Ofcom.

Ofcom are serving an audience who may be seen as consumers and/or citizens, with consequences for regulation: consumers have wants, are individuals, seek private benefits from the media, use the language of choice, and require regulation to protect against detriment; citizens have needs, are social, seek public or social benefits from the media, use the language of rights, and require regulation to promote the public interest.

Traditional regulation is being put at risk by: increasingly globalised media industries, the rise of the digital media, and media convergence.

Application

Originally applied to television and radio, but consumerism as defined in this study can be evidenced in the online editions of newspapers and increasingly in the print editions, with the traditional public interest news function being relatively marginalised (perhaps best illustrated by a comparison of a newspaper front page from the 1950s with its contemporary counterpart).

Examples of public debates about the role of social media companies in news and disinformation would support the idea of the difficulties of regulating globalised convergent media.

Examples of the new media operating in socially responsible ways in the public interest (as is starting to happen in 2018) would argue against this theory, as would the example of strongly regulated online content in authoritarian societies such as China.

Cultural industries – Hesmondhalgh

Cultural industries follow the normal capitalist pattern of increasing concentration and integration – cultural production is owned and controlled by a few conglomerates who vertically integrate across a range of media to reduce risk.

Risk is particularly high in the cultural industries because of the difficulty in predicting success, high production costs, low reproduction costs and the fact that media products are ‘public goods’ – they are not destroyed on consumption but can be further reproduced. This means that the cultural industries rely on ‘big hits’ to cover the costs of failure. Hence industries rely on repetition through use of stars, genres, franchises, repeatable narratives and so on to sell formats to audiences, then industries and governments try to impose scarcity, especially through copyright laws.

The internet has created new powerful IT corporations, and has not transformed cultural production in a liberating and empowering way – digital technology has sped up work, commercialised leisure time, and increased surveillance by government and companies.

Application

Examples of newspapers relying on predictable audience-pleasing low-risk news – such as royalty, celebrities, lifestyle and mainstream sport content – would count as evidence to support this theory.

Patterns of ownership and control that are not vertically integrated in large corporations, e.g. that of the Guardian, would count as evidence against this theory, as would evidence of the online media allowing a diverse range of new voices to be heard.
Approaches to teaching the content

General approaches

Questions on news industries are likely to be AO1 questions asking for explanations of the media forms with the set products as examples, and potentially an AO2.2 question asking for evaluation of media industries academic ideas and arguments, so this sub topic should be taught in relation to news industries as a whole, using the Daily Mail and Mail Online and the Guardian as examples. Questions including AO1.2 will ask about the influence of media contexts, so these should be studied throughout, as suggested in the curriculum content above.

Suggested teaching and learning activities

- Explanation of the dramatic shift from print to online media as the major source of news (see Learner Activities 1 and 2).
- Researching patterns of concentration in print newspapers (see Learner Activity 3).
- Comparing print and online news in terms of how the production context of the media form influences the content (see Learner Activity 4).
- Explaining the funding of social media so that learners understand the concept of selling the audience to advertising, the economic power of data-mining and micro-targeting and how this leads to the profitability and dominance of Facebook and Google. Discussing how newspapers might respond to this dominance – by using search engines and social media to attract a wide range of readers (Mail Online) or trying to build up loyal readers globally (Guardian).
- Explaining the role of The Scott Trust in maintaining the independence and liberal ethos of the Guardian.
- Researching coverage of the change of editor at the Mail in 2018 as a case study in the role of the owner – discussing why the reportedly Europhile owners employed the fiercely Eurosceptic Paul Dacre as editor, until his sudden departure, and what this shows about the power of the owners in determining the content of newspapers.
- Researching diversity and sameness in news – comparing news in niche and mainstream newspapers to evaluate whether or not concentration of ownership means that newspapers only offer establishment views.
- Keeping up to date with political debates about newspaper self-regulation and regulation of online media, particularly in relation to news media reproducing disinformation spread by government actors (e.g. the role of the St Petersburg-based Internet Research Agency).
- Looking at news reviews (e.g. on radio or television news) and seeing which newspapers and news sites are cited as authoritative sources.

Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have

Digital native learners may not be aware of the historical significance of print newspapers and their relationship to democracy nor of the funding of social media.

A major difficulty is distinguishing between economic contexts and media industries as the two overlap considerably. Establishing, for example, 'free market capitalism' as an economic context and the operation of specific capitalist news enterprises as the media industries might help establish the distinction between media contexts and the theoretical framework.

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

The subject content for Media Industries for news will be used again in the study of film, video games, radio and long form television drama. Understanding of this content, the influence of media contexts and the application of academic ideas and arguments will be reinforced by comparing how the same content, contexts and theories (for long form television drama only) are applied across different media forms.
Approaches to teaching the content

**Learner activity 1 – Researcning the decline in print newspaper circulations**

Learners compare data they find e.g. on Wikipedia with a given table of print circulations from January 2000 on Learner resource 1 in the separate zip folder.

**Learner activity 2 – Online readership**

Learners compare online readership using e.g. at newsworks.org.uk and compare it to data on Learner resource 2 in the separate zip folder.

**Learner activity 3 – Concentration of ownership**

Learners use the data from Learner activity 1 to investigate the current concentration of ownership of paid for print newspaper, using Wikipedia or Newsworks. An example of data from August 2018 is shown in Learner resource 3.

**Learner activity 4 – The effects of the economic context on news production**

Globalisation: ask learners to compare the content of the online editions of the set newspapers aimed at global audiences to the print editions aimed at UK audiences – compare the Mail Online to the Daily Mail, and compare the Guardian website, especially the US and Australian editions, to the print newspaper. Suggest they make notes on two examples from each newspaper of how distribution to a global audience has affected the news content.

Suggest learners notes on the use of cheaper formats, such as soft news, lifestyle journalism, opinion sections, and sports journalism in The Guardian, Daily Mail and Mail Online and note where sections of the newspapers or websites attract advertising specific to that content.

**Learner activity 5 – Academic ideas and arguments log**

Suggest that learners add to their log of examples where specific academic ideas and arguments have been useful in understanding and analysing print and online news. Get them to give each idea a rating out of 10 in terms of its usefulness.
SUB TOPIC 2
MEDIA AUDIENCES, THEORIES AND CONTEXTS

Curriculum content

Media audiences content includes:

- how audiences are categorised by news industries
- how news producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences through content, marketing and distribution
- the interrelationship between media technologies and news consumption and response
- how audiences interpret the news, interact with the news, and can be actively involved in news production
- the way in which different interpretations reflect social, cultural and historical contexts
- the different ways audiences defined by demographics, identity, and cultural capital use the news
- the different needs of mass and specialised audiences and their significance to the news
- how specialised audiences can be reached through different technologies and platforms, nationally and globally
- use and evaluation of the ideas of Bandura, Gerbner, Hall, Jenkins and Shirky on media audiences.

Suggested detailed content

How audiences are categorised by news industries

PAMCo – the publishers’ audience measurement company – categorises print newspaper audiences in terms of social class (A/B/C1/C2/D/E), age, gender and region to sell audiences to advertisers, giving figures like those in the table below (for 2018):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print audience</th>
<th>Daily Mail</th>
<th>The Guardian</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Men</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Women</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 15-34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 35-54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 55+</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% AB adults</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% C1C2 adults</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31 (22% C1, 9% C2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% DE adults</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% London</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Midlands</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% South and South East</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% North West</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
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</table>

These categories show that the Guardian readership is much younger, more upmarket (more middle class), much more London-based and slightly more male than the Daily Mail readership. The Mail’s middle market bias is shown in the high proportion of C1/C2 readers and its reach into both the AB and E categories, making its audience more evenly spread than the Guardian’s.

However, although the differences in the audiences for the print newspaper are huge, data shows that the differences are much less for the online editions. The Mail Online's audience is, compared to the Guardian's, only very slightly less upmarket, only slightly older, only slightly more female, and slightly less London-based.

Influence of contexts

The historical decline in the social significance of social class.
The increasing significance of psychographics over demographics.
How news producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences through content and marketing

Detailed analysis of the chosen front pages of the Daily Mail and the Guardian plus examples of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram posts in terms of how they target and address audiences.

Overview of the different sections of the Guardian and Daily Mail print editions in terms of how they target and address different audiences (e.g. the ‘Inspire’, ‘the Verdict’, ‘Good Health’, ‘Money Mail’, ‘Travel Mail’ and ‘Femail’ sections on different days in the Daily Mail; the ‘Media’, ‘Education’ and ‘Society’ sections on different days in the Guardian: regular divisions into News, Finance, Puzzles, Opinion and Sport in both newspapers; the Guardian’s separate G2 on ‘Life and Culture’).

Overview of the different target audiences and audience address of the full range of newspapers (and associated social media) that might be used for unseen analysis.

Research into any advertising for newspapers (much less common currently).

Influence of contexts

The impact of consumerism on audiences – decreasing audience loyalty?

The impact of feminism – liberal newspapers such as the Guardian no longer target female audiences with dedicated women’s pages as this would be patronising.

Multiculturalism and changing attitudes to sexualities have increased the range of minorities addressed by newspapers.

Political and historical events and issues will affect how unified or polarised the newspaper audience is perceived to be – polarisation in the Brexit debate, for example, has been accentuated by newspapers targeting specific sides in the issue.

The interrelationship between media technologies and news consumption and response

The relationship between print technology and the reader experience – for example guidance by page layout such as the impact of banner headlines and large photographs. Increasing demands for immediacy and interactivity with online technology meaning perhaps a lower expectation of what counts as ‘news’.

Influence of contexts

The social and cultural expectations of choice, control and participation associated with online media in a consumerist society are in tension with the cultural authority given to print newspapers when compared to websites.

The economic context of successful online competition with print journalism and the collapse of the latter’s revenues.

The global political and economic context of different levels of access to the internet influences the success of online media (e.g. in authoritarian and less affluent countries such as North Korea).
How audiences interpret the news, interact with the news, and can be actively involved in news production

The way in which different interpretations reflect social, cultural and historical contexts

Hall's typology of audience interpretations can now be tested by reading audience comments on online news articles, finding examples of dominant, negotiated and oppositional readings.

These may also illustrate Jenkins' participatory culture, e.g. threads that develop their own direction away from the original article, and Shirky's argument that amateur producers have different motivations to those of professionals – they value autonomy, competence, membership and generosity – and that user-generated content creates emotional connection between people who care about something.

The influence of contexts

Several factors may influence the audience to actively interpret and interact with the news to a greater extent:

- the decline in deference to one's 'betters' – which has influenced our view that the public has a right to be heard and to argue with 'experts'
- a historical period that sees more political conflict (such as over Brexit, or increasing political polarisation) may accentuate this, as audiences may be clearer about their viewpoints during such times
- the impact of feminism has been to give women a more public voice
- the impact of multiculturalism has been to give ethnic minorities a more public voice
- changing attitudes to sexualities have given minority sexualities a more public voice
- a postmodern culture in which truth is a more relative concept may encourage the audience to dispute authority.

The different ways audiences defined by demographics, identity, and cultural capital use the news

The different needs of mass and specialised audiences and their significance to the news

How specialised audiences can be reached through different technologies and platforms, nationally and globally

Overview of different kinds of print and online newspapers serving very different audiences: regional, local, ethnic minority, religious groups, non-mainstream political groups, business people.

Overview of the levels of cultural capital required to understand different genres of newspaper, e.g. the broadsheet and tabloid press, and discussion of the different and similar gratifications offered by these newspapers.

Overview of how specialist audiences can be reached globally by online news media.

Academic ideas and arguments

(See the document www.ocr.org.uk/Images/421658-academic-ideas-and-arguments-factsheet.pdf for the strengths and limitations of each theory.)

Bandura

The media can influence people directly – human values, judgement and conduct can be altered directly by media modelling. The media may influence directly or by social networks, so people can be influenced by media messages without being exposed to them. Different media have different effects. The 'new' media offer opportunities for self-directedness.

Application

Studies of news sources that show the same values and judgements underlying different newspaper coverage (e.g. expressing core ideologies such as democracy and the rule of law, or individualism) may suggest a direct effect on audiences.

Studies of news sources with radically different values and judgements, or where audience comments suggest oppositional readings of the original articles, may suggest that news sources will have less of a direct effect.
Gerbner

Gerbner used content analysis to analyse repeated media messages and values, then found that heavy users of television were more likely, for example, to develop 'mean world syndrome' – a cynical, mistrusting attitude towards others – following prolonged exposure to high levels of television violence. Heavy TV viewing leads to 'mainstreaming' – a common outlook on the world based on the images and labels on TV.

**Application**

As Gerbner studied the effect of television his study is less directly applicable to print and online news, where competing viewpoints are common, except that long term media use may lead to cultivated effects.

Could be applied to audiences who remain within a print or digital 'bubble' and have their viewpoints constantly reinforced – 'Guardian-readers' and 'Mail-readers' who never read other sources of news.

The presence of alternative viewpoints – e.g. in comments on news articles – may count as evidence against the cultivation effect in online media.

Hall

Hall’s ‘encoding-decoding’ model argued that media producers encode ‘preferred meanings’ into texts, but these texts may be ‘read’ by their audiences in a number of different ways:

- the dominant-hegemonic position
- the negotiated position
- the oppositional reading.

**Application**

As suggested above, comments on online news may be a rich source of these different readings, as will other forms of audience research. News sources will tend towards a ‘preferred meaning’ within journalistic discourse, supporting this theory, but any examples of deeply ironic or polysemic messages could work as counter-examples, though both the Guardian and Mail have a strong ethos that tends to pervade their material (perhaps less so in the Mail Online).

Jenkins

Fans act as ‘textual poachers.’ The development of the ‘new’ media has accelerated ‘participatory culture,’ in which audiences are active and creative participants. They create online communities, produce new creative forms, collaborate to solve problems, and shape the flow of media.

Shirky

In the ‘old’ media, centralised producers addressed atomised consumers; in the ‘new’ media, every consumer is now a producer. Traditional media producers would ‘filter then publish’; as many ‘new’ media producers are not employees, they ‘publish then filter’.

These amateur producers have different motivations to those of professionals – they value autonomy, competence, membership and generosity. User-generated content creates emotional connection between people who care about something.

‘The Audience’ as a mass of people with predictable behaviour is gone. Now, behaviour is variable across different sites, with some of the audience creating content, some synthesising content and some consuming content. The ‘old’ media created a mass audience. The ‘new’ media provide a platform for people to provide value for each other.

**Application**

Examples of citizen journalism, interaction with news sites, and audiences using a media text as a starting point to generate a discourse that spills out in different directions would validate these approaches.

Examples where application of traditional news values sets the news agenda – i.e. much mainstream news reporting – would argue against these approaches.
General approaches

Questions on news audiences are likely to be AO1 questions asking for explanations of the media forms with the set products as examples, and potentially an AO2.2 question asking for evaluation of media audiences academic ideas and arguments, so this sub topic should be taught in relation to news industries as a whole, using the Daily Mail and Mail Online and the Guardian as examples. Questions including AO1.2 will ask about the influence of media contexts, so these should be studied throughout, as suggested in the curriculum content above.

Suggested teaching and learning activities

- A comparison of audience address to different target audiences in the Guardian and Mail print editions (see Activity 1).
- An overview of the range of print newspapers in terms of how their style and content creates audience address (see Activity 2).
- Detailed discussion of the role of print and online technology and news consumption and response by comparison of the audience address and possible audience needs met by the differences in the print and online editions and social media feeds of the Guardian and Daily Mail/MailOnline (see Activity 3).
- Research into differences in audience responses to, uses of, and needs fulfilled by online and print news, with especial reference to the Guardian and Daily Mail/ MailOnline (see Activity 4).
- Investigation of specialist, perhaps global, audiences served by online news (e.g. news for groups defined by a special interest, e.g. birdwatchers, or a shared identity, e.g. Britons living abroad).
- Researching contemporary examples of citizen journalism and participation.
- Learners to log examples where the ideas of Bandura, Gerbner, Hall, Jenkins and Shirky have been useful in understanding media audiences for their set products and the media form as a whole (and note which academic ideas and argument have fewer entries). See Activity 5.

Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have

Learners often miscategorise children and learners as social class E even though people in full-time education are categorised by the social class of their head of household.

While audience address is a property of the media products themselves, Learners must be made aware that many other aspects of media audiences cannot be studied from the media products only, but require research into actual audiences.

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

The subject content for Media Audiences for news will be used again in the study of video games, radio and long form television drama. Understanding of this content, the influence of media contexts and the application of academic ideas and arguments will be reinforced by comparing how the same content, contexts and theories (for long form television drama only) are applied across different media forms.


### Learner activity 6 – Audience data and audience address

Suggest that learners:

- Research recent audience data for the print editions of the Guardian and Mail (e.g. at Newsworks).
- Compare the audience address of the different sections of one edition of each newspaper and share your results with other members of the class who have chosen their two newspapers from different days of the week.
- Discuss how far the different audience address of the two newspapers reflects their different audiences.

### Learner activity 7 – Front page comparison

Suggest that learners access the range of newspaper front pages (e.g. at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs/the_papers](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs/the_papers)) over several days and review:

1. Which newspapers carry which front page stories and images?
2. What kind of audience might be addressed by each newspaper’s form and content?

This is to generate a sense of the style and audience address of each newspaper for possible analysis questions based on unseen sources.

### Learner activity 8 – Print and online technology and news consumption and response

Suggest that learners:

- Compare the print edition of the Guardian with the website, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook feeds. Do the different print and online technologies influence which audience is targeted, the way the audience is addressed, which content is available to them, and the level of audience participation?
- Compare the print edition of the Daily Mail with the Mail Online website, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook feeds. Do the different print and online technologies influence which audience is targeted, the way the audience is addressed, which content is available to them, and the level of audience participation?

### Learner activity 9 – Audience responses, uses and needs

Suggest learners:

- Find at least one example in comments on both Guardian and Mail Online articles of each of Hall’s three types of audience response: the dominant reading, the negotiated reading, the oppositional reading. (Warning, be aware that MailOnline comments are not always moderated so may include inappropriate content.)
- Pick one headline from the Guardian and Daily Mail and research different audience responses to these headlines, trying to achieve responses from a range of people of different genders, age, and political affiliations. Share your findings with the rest of your class to build up a case study of different responses.
- Find and interview one example of a minority group (defined by factors such as ethnicity, political affiliation, religion or hobbies) that uses non-mainstream news media either in print or online and discuss with them how their media use fits with their sense of identity.
- Compare the priority given to articles in the Guardian website with their position in the 'most viewed' table to compare audience use to the newspaper’s news values. For the MailOnline, compare the number of comments to the stories’ prominence on the home page.

### Learner activity 10

Suggest that learners add to their log of examples where specific academic ideas and arguments have been useful in understanding and analysing print and online news. Get them to give each idea a rating out of 10 in terms of its usefulness.
### SUB TOPIC 3

**MEDIA LANGUAGE, THEORIES AND CONTEXTS**

**Curriculum content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media language content includes:</th>
<th>The generic conventions of print and online newspapers, their variations, change over time, hybridity and challenging/subverting conventions – including Neale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• the combination of elements to create meaning (semiotics and polysemy) – including with reference to Barthes</td>
<td>• Explanation of the historical origins of ‘tabloid’ and ‘broadsheet’ as newspaper genres (and how the terms persist as generic labels despite being outdated as descriptions of page size).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the generic conventions of print and online newspapers, their variations, change over time, hybridity and challenging/subverting conventions – including with reference to Neale</td>
<td>• Generic conventions of newspapers across the range of national print newspapers, including generic hybridity and variation (e.g. middle market tabloids, the i, the effects of tabloid size on the quality press, ‘broadloidisation’, and the significance of examples of exceptions to the conventions – e.g. the Daily Mail on September 3 2015, the Guardian on 18 September 2014).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the relationship between media language and technology in print and online newspapers</td>
<td>• Adoption of print newspaper conventions across online newspapers and their use of social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the significance of intertextuality – including with reference to Baudrillard</td>
<td>• Variation in conventions across print and online iterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies – including with reference to Barthes, Todorov and Levi-Strauss</td>
<td>• Explanation of how variations and hybridity reflect Neale’s argument that genre conventions are ever-changing shared codes rather than fixed reference points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• audience interpretations of media language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the influence of media contexts on media language in newspapers</td>
<td><strong>The relationship between media language and technology in print and online newspapers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use and evaluation of the ideas of Barthes, Todorov, Levi-Strauss, Neale and Baudrillard in analysing newspapers.</td>
<td>• How technology influences the inflection of generic conventions, for example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the hybridised features of online broadsheet newspapers – more use of colour and sans-serif fonts and less body copy on the home page, plus the greater prominence of lifestyle, opinion and sports articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the hybridised features of online tabloid home pages – fewer capitalised banner headlines, less dominance by image, more hard news, longer headlines to attract clickthroughs on social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How online news media language varies across PC, tablet and phone versions of the websites and on social media feeds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The significance of intertextuality – including Baudrillard

• Common reasons for intertextuality: humour, parody or homage, value-transference, shorthand meaning, flattering mode of address.
• The link between intertextuality and Baudrillard’s concept of hyperreality – examples of looped meanings with no obvious original reference (e.g. intertextual references to stories about celebrities’ PR stunts). Postmodern audiences expecting intertextuality.

The way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies – including Barthes, Todorov and Levi-Strauss

• Barthes’ concept of myths ‘naturalising’ ideology.
• Todorov’s concept of narrative transformation from initial equilibrium to new equilibrium and the use of this to discover values and ideology within (implied) narratives.
• The use of Levi-Straussian binary oppositions to discover underlying structures of meaning and their values and ideologies.

Audience interpretations of media language
Covered under media audiences.

The influence of media contexts on media language in newspapers

• Comparison of 1950s front pages with contemporary counterparts shows the influence of:
  - consumerism – the role of marketing and consumer choice in contemporary media language
  - celebrity culture – in the dominance of the celebrity image
  - feminism and multiculturalism – in the attempt to avoid racist and sexist language
  - postmodernism – in the use of intertextuality.

Academic ideas and arguments and media language

(See the document www.ocr.org.uk/Images/421658-academic-ideas-and-arguments-factsheet.pdf for the strengths and limitations of each theory.)

The curriculum content above and the related teaching and learning activities below should provide examples of the usefulness of each theory in analysing media language.
Approaches to teaching the content

General approaches

Questions on news media language are likely to be AO2.1 (and AO2.3) questions asking for analysis of unseen extracts (and judgements and conclusions), and potentially an AO2.2 question asking for evaluation of media language academic ideas and arguments. For the AO2.1 (and AO2.3) questions this sub topic should be taught in relation to a range of print and online news products. While it may help understanding of media audiences and industries to concentrate to some extent on the Daily Mail and Mail Online and the Guardian as examples, Learners will need to develop the skills to analyse any news product as the two unseen extracts will not come from both the set products.

Suggested teaching and learning activities

• Introduction to genre in news starting with an overview of the range of print newspapers, establishing the conventions of red top tabloid, middle market and ‘broadsheet’ newspapers. (See Activity 11).

• Study how genre conventions are inflected through different online iterations of newspapers through comparison of the print front page to the home page and Twitter, Instagram and Facebook feeds for the Guardian, the Daily Mail/Mail Online and a red top tabloid newspaper. Discuss the role of the technology in causing variation in generic conventions. (See Activity 12).

• Introduction to practical media language analysis through demonstration and student practice of analytical skills, applying key ideas of connotation, polysemy, anchorage, Barthesian myth, viewpoints and ideologies, including implied narratives and binary oppositions, and intertextuality. This should include comparison of pairs of print products, news home pages, and news Twitter, Instagram and Facebook feeds, preferably examples from two different newspapers covering similar content using different media language (as in the Sample Assessment Material) or, on occasion, different content expressing the newspapers’ different news values (as these comparisons may be used for both media language and representation analysis in the exam). Learners should also gain practice in comparing news from different media forms (e.g. comparing online and print). Learners should be provided with an ‘ideology toolkit’ that can be applied to media language analysis (see Activity 13).

• Explanation of the social and political viewpoint of each of the national paid for print newspapers, as in the table below, and practice in reading the viewpoint of the newspaper from the use of media language on the front page (see Activity 14).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Political position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Times</td>
<td>Right of centre, most often supports the Conservative Party but supported the Labour Party under Tony Blair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Telegraph</td>
<td>Right wing and socially conservative – supports the Conservative Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian</td>
<td>Left of centre and socially liberal – usually supports the Labour Party but has supported the Liberal Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Times</td>
<td>Pro-business – usually supports the Conservative Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Centrist – not politically affiliated, but the paper has endorsed the Liberal Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The i</td>
<td>Centrist – not politically affiliated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mail</td>
<td>Right wing and socially conservative – supports the Conservative Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Express</td>
<td>Right wing, usually supports the Conservative Party but has endorsed the Labour Party (under Tony Blair) and UKIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Right of centre, most often supports the Conservative Party but supported the Labour Party under Tony Blair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mirror</td>
<td>Left of centre – supports the Labour Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Star</td>
<td>No clear political affiliation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Investigation into differences in actual audience response to the media language in different news sources, such as interest/boredom, engagement/distaste and so on. Test what people notice and remember from the news sources.

• Learners to log examples where the ideas of Barthes, Todorov, Neale, Levi-Strauss and Baudrillard have been useful in undertaking analysis (and note which academic ideas and argument have fewer entries). See Activity 15.
Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have

Learners need to have a general understanding of a range of newspapers as they may be given any newspaper print edition, website or social media feed to analyse in terms of media language in the exam. This requires them to move beyond the set products to develop an understanding of generic conventions and media language use in news across the two media forms.

Learners must be aware that the online versions of newspapers may have different editorial staff to the print editions and this, plus their different target audiences, may lead to differences in media language.

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

The subject content for Media Language for news will be used again in the study of advertising and marketing, magazines, music video and long form television drama. Understanding of this content, the influence of media contexts and the application of academic ideas and arguments will be reinforced by comparing how the same content, contexts and theories (the latter for long form television drama only) are applied across different media forms.
## Approaches to teaching the content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner activity 11 – Conventions in news (printed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask learners to research how far national print newspapers fit the generic conventions listed in Learner resource 11 in the separate zip folder.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner activity 12 – Conventions in online news</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask learners to research how far national print newspapers fit the generic conventions listed in Learner resource 12 in the separate zip folder.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner activity 13 – Analysing media language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use Learner resource 13 in the separate zip folder and ask learners to apply an ‘ideology toolkit’ to analyse media language in news.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner activity 14 – Guess the newspaper quiz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular icebreaker: you read out the headlines from that day’s print newspapers and learners have to guess which newspaper each headline is from. Repeat with online editions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension activity: you select a news story and learners construct a series of headlines in the style and viewpoint of individual newspapers – compare to the actual headlines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner activity 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask learners to add to their log of examples where specific academic ideas and arguments have been useful in understanding and analysing print and online news. Get them to give each idea a rating out of 10 in terms of its usefulness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUB TOPIC 4

MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS, THEORIES AND CONTEXTS

Curriculum content

Media representations content includes:

- how selection and combination creates representations of events, issues, individuals and social groups
- how news makes claims about realism and constructs versions of reality
- the impact of the media industry and social, cultural and historical contexts on how producers choose to represent events, issues, individuals and social groups
- positive and negative uses of stereotyping
- how social groups may be under-represented or misrepresented
- how representations, particularly those that systematically reinforce values, attitudes and beliefs about the world across many representations, invoke discourses and ideologies and position audiences
- suggest how audience response and interpretation reflects social, cultural and historical circumstances
- apply and evaluate the ideas of Hall, Gauntlett, Butler, Van Zoonen, hooks, and Gilroy in analysing newspapers.

How news makes claims about realism and constructs versions of reality

- Institutional factors backing the realism (accuracy and truthfulness) of journalism: journalistic ethics and the ethos of serious newspapers, the traditional separation of editorial and advertising, the libel laws, journalistic regulators. How these may vary within different types of journalism (e.g. local free newspapers versus national paid for broadsheets).
- Application of Todorov’s narratology and Levi-Strauss’s binary oppositions to news stories to elucidate how realities are constructed by news stories.
- Case study of the comparison between the Daily Mail’s ‘common-sense’ version of reality based on adoption of a traditional dominant ideology and the Guardian’s more questioning construction of reality based on more self-conscious ‘progressive’ ideologies.

How selection and combination creates representations of events, issues, individuals and social groups

- The concept of news values and their effect on selection of news. Changes in news values due to technological change (e.g. the increasing primacy of visuals).
- The worldview and ethos of different newspapers, especially the Daily Mail and the Guardian, and their effects on processes of selection and combination. Use of the Daily Mail and the Guardian as a case study of representations.
The impact of the media industry and social, cultural and historical contexts on how producers choose to represent events, issues, individuals and social groups

- Case study of the media industry background to the Guardian – the Scott Trust – and the Daily Mail/Mail Online – private ownership – and the effects of these on representations (explore differences within the Mail stable, especially between the pre-September 2018 pro-brexit Daily Mail and anti-brexit Mail on Sunday, to discuss the effect of ownership on representations).
- Discussion of the ethos of all the national newspapers as expressed in their front pages.
- Impact of contexts on representations: the rise of feminism, multiculturalism, changing attitudes to sexualities, postmodernism, consumerism, celebrity culture, and political issues such as the rise of the populist right, increasing international tension, global warming, and so on.

Positive and negative uses of stereotyping

- Explanation of the term and its limitations (e.g. implying that this ‘fuzzy concept’ has a definite, measurable reality). Examples of positive and negative stereotyping. The difference between using stereotypes unthinkingly and as a strategy to explore the stereotype. The relationship between stereotyping and shorthand meanings and informal modes of address suggesting community.
- The relationship between stereotyping and ideologies of exclusion such as sexism, racism, ageism, heterosexism, ethnocentrism, class snobbery, body shaming and so on.

How social groups may be under-represented or misrepresented

- Issues of diversity, stereotyping and tokenism. Self-representation and representation by others.
- The relationship between under and mis-representation and ideologies of exclusion.

How representations, particularly those that systematically reinforce values, attitudes and beliefs about the world across many representations, invoke discourses and ideologies and position audiences

- Unpacking the wide range of terms in this list and explaining the large amount of overlap between them, e.g. the way that shared beliefs, values, and attitudes may become taken-for-granted ideologies.
- Discourses as systems of power-knowledge (Foucault) such as medicine, education, or management that have their own effectivity. Ideologies as shared values and beliefs that reflect power relations that are external to the ideology, e.g. racism, or reflect wider society, e.g. individualism.
- Audience positioning as the way media products try to create a subjective position for their audience to inhabit. Forms of positioning: emotional, intellectual, cultural, and so on. Ways that audiences might resist or accept positioning, or both simultaneously.

How audience response and interpretation reflects social, cultural and historical circumstances

- Impact of contexts on audience response to representations: the rise of feminism, multiculturalism, changing attitudes to sexualities, postmodernism, consumerism, celebrity culture, and political issues such as the rise of the populist right, increasing international tension, global warming, and so on.
Academic ideas and arguments

(See the document www.ocr.org.uk/Images/421658-academic-ideas-and-arguments-factsheet.pdf for the strengths and limitations of each theory.)

Hall

Representation is not about whether the media reflects or distorts reality, as this implies that there can be one ‘true’ meaning, but the many meanings a representation can generate. Thus, meaning can be contested.

A representation implicates the audience in creating its meaning. Power – through ideology or by stereotyping – tries to fix the meaning of a representation in a ‘preferred meaning’. To create deliberate anti-stereotypes is still to attempt to fix the meaning (albeit in a different way). A more effective strategy is to go inside the stereotype and open it up from within, to deconstruct the work of representation.

Evidence that might support this theory includes:

• examples of audience contestation of preferred meanings in products (e.g. through analysis of comments as suggested under audience)
• examples of attempts to go against stereotypes that unwittingly reinforce those stereotypes
• examples of successful attempts to deconstruct a stereotype by revealing and thus undermining its stereotypical nature.

Theories of Identity – Gauntlett

The media have an important but complex relationship with identities. In the modern world it is now an expectation that individuals make choices about their identity and lifestyle. Even in the traditional media, there are many diverse and contradictory media messages that individuals can use to think through their identities and ways of expressing themselves.

The online media offer people a route to self-expression, and therefore a stronger sense of self and participating in the world by making and exchanging. People still build identities, but through everyday, creative practice.

Evidence that might support this theory includes:

• examples where the success of ‘popular feminism’ and increasing representation of different sexualities represents the meaning of gender, sexuality and identity as increasingly open
• examples where news encourages participation and new forms of identity (e.g. news about the me-too movement).

Feminist Theory – Van Zoonen

In patriarchal culture the way women’s bodies are represented as objects is different to the representation of male bodies as spectacle.

Gender is performative – our ideas of femininity and masculinity are constructed in our performances of these roles.

Evidence that might support this theory includes:

• examples of representations centred on objectifications of women’s bodies and other patriarchal representations
• examples of news that represents the construction of gender (e.g. debates about trans women).
Feminist Theory – hooks
Feminism is a movement to end patriarchy: sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. ‘Intersectionality’ refers to the intersections of gender, race, class and sexuality to create a ‘white supremacist capitalist patriarchy’, whose ideologies dominate media representations. She argues that black women should develop an ‘oppositional gaze’ that refuses to identify with characters.

Evidence that might support this theory includes:
- examples of representations reinforcing the ‘white supremacist capitalist patriarchy’
- examples of oppositional black female responses to news.

Theories of Gender Performativity – Butler
Gender is created in how we perform our gender roles – there is no essential gender identity behind these roles, it is created in the performance. Performativity is not a singular act but a repetition and a ritual that becomes naturalised within the body.

Evidence that might support this theory includes:
- examples of repetition of representations reinforcing gender performances
- examples of news that ‘queers’ gender norms.

Theories around ethnicity and post-colonial theory – Gilroy
The African diaspora caused by the slave trade has now constructed a transatlantic culture that is simultaneously African, American, Caribbean and British – the ‘Black Atlantic’.

Britain has failed to mourn its loss of empire, creating ‘post-colonial melancholia’, an attachment to an airbrushed version of British colonial history, which expresses itself in criminalising immigrants and an ‘us and them’ approach to the world founded on the belief in the inherent superiority of white western civilisation.

Evidence that might support this theory includes:
- examples of representations celebrating a transnational Black culture
- examples of representations that reinforce a white version of Britishness and a view of the world that reflects the British experience of empire and colonialism.
Thinking conceptually

Approaches to teaching the content

General approaches

Questions on news representations are likely to be AO2.1 (and AO2.3) questions asking for analysis of unseen extracts (and judgements and conclusions), and potentially an AO2.2 question asking for evaluation of representation academic ideas and arguments. For the AO2.1 (and AO2.3) questions this sub topic should be taught in relation to a range of print and online news products. While it may help understanding of media audiences and industries to concentrate to some extent on the Daily Mail and Mail Online and the Guardian as examples, learners will need to develop the skills to analyse any news product as the two unseen extracts will not come from both the set products.

Suggested teaching and learning activities

• Regular practice in analysing representations in a range of newspapers in their print and online editions and social media feeds, deploying key terms such as: selection, stereotyping and anti-stereotyping and deconstructing stereotypes, self-representation and representation by others, diversity and under-representation, realism, ideologies and discourses (especially patriarchy, class superiority, racism, and post-colonial melancholia), audience positioning and audience creativity and resistance, the influence of contexts (Learner resource 18 contains a table of ideologies).

• Investigation into differences in actual audience response to the representations in different news sources – dominant, negotiated and oppositional readings – and the effects of contexts on these (Activity 19).

• Learners to log examples where the ideas of Hall, Gauntlett, Van Zoonen, Butler and Gilroy have been useful in undertaking analysis (and note which academic ideas and argument have fewer entries). See Activity 20.

Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have

Learners need to have a general understanding of a range of newspapers as they may be given any newspaper print edition, website or social media feed to analyse in terms of representations in the exam. This requires them to move beyond the set products to develop an understanding of representations in news across the two media forms.

The concept of ideology is difficult for many learners to grasp – a common error is to see an ideology as equivalent to a viewpoint.

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

The subject content for Representations for news will be used again in the study of advertising and marketing, magazines, music video and long form television drama. Understanding of this content, the influence of media contexts and the application of academic ideas and arguments will be reinforced by comparing how the same content, contexts and theories (the latter for long form television drama only) are applied across different media forms.
## Approaches to teaching the content

**Learner activity 16 - The commutation test**

Ask learners to look at a range of front pages and home pages of newspapers.

For each product, ask them to imagine changing the social groups represented in a photograph; e.g. swap a woman for a man, or vice versa, swap young and old people, swap able-bodied people with people with a visible disability, swap races, swap body sizes and shapes, and so on, and any other swap they can think of.

For each swap, ask them to consider: does this significantly change the meaning of the image?

**Learner activity 17 - Audience positioning**

Ask learners to look at a range of front pages and home pages of newspapers.

For each product, suggest learners pick one headline that tries to fix the meaning of the story and note what position the headline is trying to place the audience in: how should they feel, what should they think, to which group are they supposed to belong? Ask them to consider which people or social groups might not want to be positioned in that way.

For example, a famous headline from the Daily Mail 13/06/2016: ‘Fury over plot to let 1.5m Turks into Britain’ ([https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3637523/Secret-plan-open-borders-1-5m-Turks-British-diplomats-admit-risk-tell-ministers-symbolic-gesture-Turkey.html](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3637523/Secret-plan-open-borders-1-5m-Turks-British-diplomats-admit-risk-tell-ministers-symbolic-gesture-Turkey.html)) has a positioning strategy to position the audience as furious, as suspicious of plots (probably by the liberal elite), as not wanting more Turks in Britain, and as British. Each of these could be contested by an audience reading the headline who might be wary of the use of anger to whip up political sentiment, suspicious of right wing populist conspiracy theories, and internationalist (e.g. Guardian-readers) or Turkish.

**Learner activity 18 - Applying the ‘ideology toolkit’**

Suggest learners develop a toolkit (like the table in Learner resource 18 and also shown below) and get learners to use the toolkit when analysing news stories and finding examples in the news.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Influence on representations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>Stories celebrating individuals, especially when they are standing up to big organisations. Stories celebrating the freedom of the individual usually express individualism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democracy</td>
<td>Representations of political leaders, decision-makers, and political issues. References to ‘the will of the people’ expressed through voting or opinion polls, representations of the rule of law (or its opposite, such as terrorism), freedom of expression (or its opposite, such as censorship and propaganda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfarism</td>
<td>Representations of welfare state issues, such as benefits, education or the NHS, or of ordinary people needing or offering collective help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialism</td>
<td>News stories about wealth, income and material goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumerism</td>
<td>News stories or lifestyle articles about brands, lifestyle and identity choices, and self-fulfilment through buying goods and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism/patriarchal ideology</td>
<td>ExpRESSED through unchallenged sexist stereotyping, sexually objectified representations of women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>Support for women’s struggle for equality, representations of women with agency and power, exposing and criticising sexism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Unchallenged racist stereotyping or representations that imply racist beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-racism or Multiculturalism</td>
<td>Represented by respect for different cultures, support of minority groups in their struggle for equality, exposing and criticising racism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnocentrism (or post-colonial melancholia)</td>
<td>ExpRESSED by representations that prioritise British lifestyle and culture over others (e.g. little coverage of foreign news), or represent other cultures from the point of view of a superior outsider</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learner activity 19 - Audience response to representations

As before, for media audiences, ask learners to find at least one example in comments on both Guardian and Mail Online articles of each of Hall’s three types of audience response with specific reference to the representations: the dominant reading, the negotiated reading, the oppositional reading. (Warning, be aware that MailOnline comments are not always moderated so may include inappropriate content.)

Suggest learners pick one headline from the Guardian and Daily Mail and research different audience responses to the representations in these headlines, trying to achieve responses from a range of people of different genders, age, and political affiliation. Get them to share their findings with the rest of your class to build up a case study of different responses.

Learner activity 20

Ask learners to add to their log of examples where specific academic ideas and arguments have been useful in understanding and analysing print and online news. Get them to give each idea a rating out of ten in terms of its usefulness.
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