OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

MEDIA STUDIES

J200
For first teaching in 2017

J200/01 Summer 2024 series

Contents

Introduction

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

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

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

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Paper 1 series overview

J200/01 Television and Promoting Media is one of two examination components for this GCSE. This is the sixth sitting of this qualification since its inception in 2019 but only the fourth full sitting because of changes to the assessment of GCSEs in Summer 2020 and 2021.

Summer 2024 is the final time that *Cuffs* and Series 4, Episode 1 of *The Avengers* ('The Town of No Return') will be assessed. The set products for future series will be Series 1, Episode 1 of *Vigil* (BBC) and Series 4, Episode 2 ('The Gravediggers') of *The Avengers* (ITV). Further information on the set product changes can be found on the OCR website here.

This paper targets both AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis) questions and includes a synoptic element.

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

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

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- used their time productively by answering all the questions - correctly identified which areas of the theoretical framework and contexts were being assessed in each question - made judgements in Questions 2 and 3 and reached a conclusion in Question 3 - made clear reference to contexts in Question 3 - used their wider knowledge of industry in Questions 4, 7 and 8 - made clear links between historical contexts and their influence(s) on representations in Question 5.	- missed out questions through ineffective management of time - confused camerawork with editing in Question 1 - described rather than analysed in Questions 2, 3 and 9 - did not refer to the wider theoretical framework and contexts in Question 3 - were unable to explain how historical contexts influenced representations in Question 5 - were unclear of the function of regulation in film - discussed uses and gratifications theory in Question 8.

Section A overview

Section A is comprised of five questions. Questions 1, 2 and 3 were based on the unseen extract taken from the set product *Cuffs* and the remaining two questions required candidates to refer to their knowledge of wider contexts and industry. The questions were a mix of AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis). Candidates were familiar with the extract and most coped well with the demands of the questions.

Question 1

SECTION A

Television

1 Analyse how editing is used in the extract to create meaning. Refer to at least **two** examples in your answer.

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.... **[5]**

Many candidates were able to identify at least one example of editing in the extract and the majority of these candidates were able to analyse how the examples created meaning. Successful candidates in the top level highlighted relevant techniques such as cross-cutting, shot reverse-shot and changes in pace. Effective examples included the use of cross-cutting between Ryan and Jake in the car and the school boys doing parkour foreshadowing collision of the storylines, and the use of shot reverse-shot between Jake and Ryan in the car, with the shot being on Ryan to convey his power and authority over Jake. Some candidates were able to effectively discuss how sound was edited in post-production to create meaning. A considerable minority of candidates confused editing with camerawork, focusing on the use of shot types and the 360 degree pan, and some less successful responses described the action in the extract without identifying any examples of editing.

Misconception
?   Editing and camerawork are separate aspects of the framework of media language. Camerawork is the capturing of the footage and occurs through the production stage. Editing is the assembly of the footage into a sequence and occurs during the post-production stage.

Question 2

2   Analyse how far the extract creates tension.

In your answer you must:
- analyse aspects of the extract using examples to support your analysis
- judge how far these aspects create tension.   **[10]**

Question 2 requires candidates to widen their analysis of the extract by referring to other elements of media language and/or representation, and to make a judgement in relation to how far the extract creates tension.

To reach Level 3, candidates must identify at least two examples, using media terminology in these examples. Many candidates were able to identify two clear examples and the more successful were able to use a range of key media terminology in their responses. Excellent responses in the top level discussed how the mix of non-diegetic sound (music and sound effects), along with the increase in pace of the edit during the chase sequence, built to a climax and raised tension within the narrative. Other responses focused on the growing tension between Jake and Ryan, created through the use of sound (dialogue) and editing (shot reverse-shot) conveying an unequal power dynamic between the two characters, creating a tense atmosphere in the car.

Less successful responses retold aspects of the narrative in the sequence without identifying clear examples or using any media terminology. Some candidates did not judge how far the extract created tension. A few candidates appeared to be expecting a previous exam question, and instead focused on the feeling of 'threat' or 'suspense', both previous questions on this paper.

Question 3*

3* How far does the extract challenge traditional stereotypes of gender?

In your answer you must:
- analyse the representations in the extract, giving detailed examples
- refer to relevant contexts
- make judgements and reach conclusions.

You will be rewarded for drawing together relevant elements from your full course of study. **[15]**

Question 3 is a synoptic question that requires candidates to refer to more than one area of the theoretical framework of Media Studies (media language, representation, audiences, industries, and contexts). As with Question 2, this question is asking candidates to make a judgement, in this instance about 'how far' the extract challenges traditional stereotypes of gender. There are two sets of marks for this question; the first set out of 10 marks is for how well candidates analyse the extract with responses in the top of the level requiring two or more detailed examples, and responses at the very top of this level requiring candidates to refer to relevant contexts. The second set of marks is out of 5 and is for how well the candidates make judgements and reach a conclusion about how far the extract challenges traditional stereotypes of gender. The judgement and conclusion can be throughout the response and does not have to be at the end.

Most candidates tackled this question well and were able to identify how traditional stereotypes of gender were both challenged and reinforced by the extract. In particular, candidates wrote confidently about how Donna's character is challenging traditional stereotypes of women through her taking control of the chase, out-running Lino and being physically strong. Top Level 3 candidates were able to situate this analysis within the wider context of the time such as the influence of the Equality Act and changing attitudes to women, as Exemplar 1 illustrates.

Some candidates successfully referred to wider context by discussing how the BBC as a Public Service Broadcaster has a public purpose to represent diversity and equality within its programming. Other candidates discussed how the character of Ryan both challenged and reinforced gender stereotypes through his relationship with his son, cited him as taking on a role stereotypically associated with a mother as he admonishes him for skipping school, and through his dominance and control over Jake as he raises his voice and challenges Jake in the car.

Less successful responses described the episode's narrative as a whole or referred to extracts from the programme outside the specified extract, and therefore struggled to achieve marks beyond the bottom of Level 2. A few candidates mistakenly wrote about *The Avengers*, with a few more comparing both *Cuffs* and *The Avengers*. A small number of candidates wrote about other areas of representation such as ethnicity or sexuality, and therefore limited their marks unless they were able to tie this analysis to gender.

Exemplar 1

At the time that Cuffs was released audiences were beginning to become acustomed to shows with ensemble casts, and higher representation of things that would have previously been seen as antistereotypical, such as women being stronger than men etc. This is because in 2010 the equality act took place, banning discrimination on on multiple fronts. So the extract again challenges older, more traditional stereotypes by portraying Donna to be a more capable and a stronger officer than her partner Lino. This is portrayed to the audience when they are seen running down the street chasing the criminal, and Donna is running significantly ahead of Lino, who

seems to be falling behind. This idea of Donna being faster and a more capable officer than Lino effectively challenges the traditional stereotype that men are stronger than women, while also showing a good representation of the social changes taking place around that time of women not being featured in shows just for sexual objectification, but also to represent changes in society.

In Exemplar 1, the candidate has effectively linked their analysis of the representation of gender, through the character of Donna, to the wider theoretical framework. They reference the Equality Act of 2010 and how this has affected representations of women in broadcast television.

Question 4

4 Explain **two** ways that television producers try to attract large audiences for programmes such as Cuffs.

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.... **[5]**

The vast majority of candidates responded to this question well, with many of them identifying the use of a diverse cast of characters, the inclusion of famous actors, such as Ashley Walters, and the scheduling of the programme during primetime before the watershed to bring an inherited audience as successful ways of attracting a large audience.

A small number of candidates did not know when *Cuffs* was scheduled, incorrectly identifying it as being scheduled post-watershed. Some candidates mis-read the question and instead attempted to answer a question about 'why' television producers try to attract large audiences and focused on examples such as increasing profit.

Question 5

The Avengers

5   Explain how historical contexts influence the representations in television programmes. Refer to The Avengers Series 4 Episode 1 to support your answer.   **[10]**

This question requires candidates to do several things: to explain, to identify different historical contexts and to show how these contexts influence the representations in the programme.

Candidates tackled this question well and demonstrated a really strong knowledge of the episode and the context of the series. The most successful candidates were able to identify at least two historical contexts and could then explain how these influenced representations in the programme through exemplification. Many were able to discuss how the fear of the Cold War and threats from overseas influenced the narrative in the programme, illustrated through the fifth columnists infiltrating Little Bazeley, and how the changing role of women in the 1960s as part of wider social change is illustrated through Peel's role in the narrative, strength, confidence and appearance.

Other top level responses were able to explain how Steed's appearance, attitude and actions were a reference to World War Two and Britain's triumphant role in it, as he pays his respects at the airfield and 'doffs' his hat in a mirror.

Less successful candidates tended to describe the narrative of the episode, neglecting to discuss historical contexts or the influences of these contexts on the representations. Some candidates focused their response on representations of Britishness or age, which have both been explored in previous exam series. Those who were able to tie this into historical contexts were able to access the full range of marks, but many were unable to do this. Candidates should be reminded to read the question carefully before answering.

Section B overview

Section B comprises four questions and are a mix of AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis) questions. Candidates generally performed well on all questions in this section, in particular Questions 7 and 9. However a proportion of candidates struggled with Question 8, focusing on the uses and gratifications theory rather than explaining how the video game and film promote each other. Some candidates provided responses for Question 6 from a previous series, such as 'conglomerate' or 'circulation'.

Question 6

SECTION B

Promoting Media

6 Identify the word that describes big budget films which aim to be very popular.

.... **[1]**

The majority of candidates were able to identify either 'blockbuster' or 'tentpole' (both of which were accepted as correct responses). Most incorrect responses were for questions that had been asked in previous series of this examination.

Question 7

7   Explain **one** reason why films are regulated. Use The Lego Movie as an example in your answer.

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.... **[4]**

Most candidates were able to explain one reason why films are regulated and the more successful were able to appropriately exemplify this with evidence from *The Lego Movie*. Many cited classifying films as a reason for regulating films, in order to protect the young and vulnerable from harmful content. Many were able to explain how *The Lego Movie* achieved its U rating by the cartoon style violence and absence of bad language or imitable behaviour. Less successful responses were limited in their exemplification beyond the certificate the film was awarded and lacked the detail needed for full marks.

Some candidates confused PEGI video game ratings with BBFC film ratings, and some candidates were unaware of the age certificate that the film was awarded. A small number of candidates thought that regulating films was to help them to target an audience, as a part of the marketing process, for increased monetary gain for the BBFC.

Assessment for learning

The OCR *Lego Movie* industry factsheet on Teach Cambridge explains how the film was regulated:

GCSE Media Studies - Factsheet - *The Lego Movie*: Industry

Question 8

8   Explain how releasing a video game based on a film helps promote both the game and the film. Refer to The Lego Movie Video Game in your answer.   **[10]**

The most common response to this question discussed how this form of promotion is used to widen audiences which in turn increases profits. Some candidates were able to support this with detailed exemplification from *The Lego Movie* franchise. Responses in the top Level were able to explain how releasing a video game based on a film helped to promote *The Lego Movie* franchise and extend the life of the franchise through this synergy, showing very good knowledge of the industry.

Some candidates misunderstood this question and instead focused on why people like to watch films and play video games and instead discussed the uses and gratifications theory, which was on last year's exam paper. If candidates were able to effectively tie this into the question they were awarded marks. Those who were unable to do this tended to focus on the pleasures of playing video games after watching a film, rather than focusing on the processes involved in the promotion of media products. Some responses at the bottom of Level 2 and below did not refer to *The Lego Movie* video game or film at all.

Question 9

9   Refer to **Extracts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in the Insert**. Analyse the representations in The Lego Movie poster campaign.   **[10]**

This question requires candidates to discuss representations in *The Lego Movie* poster campaign. Candidates chose a range of different social groups to analyse including gender, age and ethnicity.

Most candidates were able to identify at least two areas of representation to focus on. They typically analysed the anti-stereotypical representation of Wyldstyle as an active, confident and strong woman illustrated through her fierce expression and costume, and the anti-stereotypical representation of Emmet as a weak, vulnerable and scared male reinforced through his facial expression and performance on the poster, despite being dressed in a stereotypically male costume of a builder.

Some responses analysed the representation of Vitruvius as a counter-typical representation of an old man, who is represented as wise and powerful. Some candidates in the very top level were able to widen their analysis of representation beyond people and produced confident analyses of the representation of capitalism, illustrated through the cityscape and how the majority of the characters being male reinforced how patriarchal the city still is.

Less successful responses focused on describing the appearance of the characters in terms of media language analysis of mise-en-scene rather than focusing on representation as the question requires. Some less successful responses described how the posters were used to target audiences for the film, mistakenly listing the conventions of advertisements.

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