

AQA A Level Unit 7A Close Study Products Student Workbook 2024 Exam Onwards

Advertising and Marketing - Music Video

Assessment Overview:

Advertising and Marketing, Music Video

Close Study Products in this first unit

- **Score:** a pre-1970 male grooming product Unit 7A - **This Unit**
- **Sephora** Unit 7B
- **Black Beauty is Beauty** Unit 7B
- **Old Town Road (official Movie)** Unit 7C
 - **Lil Nas. X** featuring Billy Ray Cyrus Unit 7C
- **Ghost Town:** (The Specials) 7C

This is the Workbook for use with **EDUSITES AQA SET PRODUCTS UNIT 7A A Level MEDIA STUDIES**. All of the notes refer to the content of this unit of work. They are designed to help you create a useful set of notes to help you with understanding the ideas covered in this examination, to support you in your Home Learning and be a clear revision aid in your preparations for the final examinations that you are required to take. You need to always keep in mind the examination board Assessment Objectives that your work is to be assessed with.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the theoretical framework of media, contexts of media and their influence on media products and processes.
- Analyse media products using the theoretical framework of media, including in relation to their contexts, to make judgements and draw conclusions.
- Create media products for an intended audience, by applying knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework of media to communicate meaning.

Create products for intended audience and evaluate communication of meaning

- Demonstrate K&U of theoretical framework – *the Key concepts*
- Contexts of media products & production
- Analyse products by application of the framework/concepts/context

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Lesson 1 - The Set products

The products studied here occur in **Paper 1**

Score is a Targeted Study. This means they attract questions in Media One Section A: **Media Language and representations**

- The focus of study is not the CSP products. Study of the products is to be used to reveal the ideas of the theoretical framework and issues of context of their production and consumption. Exam questions *focus on the theoretical framework and contexts of the media*. You will be directed by each question to answer with reference to, or analysis of, the relevant CSPs.
- These products should be seen as a vehicle for the delivery of the theories and issues, rather than as products to be 'learned' in detail.
- It is essential that you study all of the CSPs, and AQA advise that you supplement these by further examples of media products in order *to develop a full knowledge and understanding of the contexts of the media and the theoretical framework*.

Lesson 2 - Research

Hypothesis

A supposition or proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation.'

A hypothesis in Media Studies most often starts with an investigation prompted by observations surrounding the way things appear to be done in certain types of media products. We look at these through the CSPs. The hypothesis sets out to test the observation by applying the idea to the CSPs and to other similar media products. The resultant exploration offers ideas as to the truth of the hypothesis and our observations or of the media theory being tested.

Research should be focused on those areas that enable you to test a hypothesis.

Good examples of the topics you will be asked to discuss in the examination are things such as:

- The sexualization of women in mainstream media products
- The way men and women are represented in the CSPs and similar media products
- The way that ethnicity is represented
- How products shape/represent identity
- The way that media products present a set of ideas and values

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- The way that ownership and control of media institutions shapes the type of product that is made
- The way that ownership of media institutions influences the content and presentation of their products

In writing about these issues and debates you must use your research. The way that you apply your acquired knowledge of the Media Framework, find evidence from your knowledge of the CSPs, use your research into the theories, show your awareness that these issues are present in similar media products means that you will demonstrate understanding.

Understanding is the key discriminator in exam marking and the final mark/grade you achieve

- Connotation - *what an image means to its audience* - is a significant part of media analysis.
- Much of what we say about a media image is based on opinion or prior knowledge, so we can never be wrong, it is simply how we see it. No-one can tell us that it isn't so. It is our opinion.
- What we do have to do, is to explain why we have this connotation, why this image means a particular thing to us and why we believe it will mean a similar thing to the audience of these media products.
- To enable us to do this we need observational evidence and an academic idea to apply. We then have a hypothesis

Revision Notes: Key Exam Focus

- To whom is the product addressed? Who are the target audience?
- What assumptions about the audience's characteristics are implicit within the poster?
- What assumptions about the audience are implicit in the product's construction?
- In what conditions are the audience likely to receive the poster? Does this impact on the way it's been constructed?
- What do you know or can you assume about the likely size and constituency of the audience?
- What are the probable and possible audience readings of the poster?
- How do you read and evaluate the product?
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To what extent is your evaluation influenced by your experience of other such products?

Lesson 3 - Preparing for Examinations

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- *SOURCES: Developing reliable examples - material that will stimulate and support your ideas and hypotheses - involves knowing where to look to find material – NOT JUST Wikipedia but elsewhere. A key source is always your own analysis of the CSP products and similar products and contexts.*
- *SELECTION: Acquiring material involves developing your media knowledge and understanding so that you can evaluate that which is worth noting and that which is trivial. This is practice at de-constructing products and their ideas*
- *RELEVANCE: knowing which of the material is useful to specific tasks. Understanding the AOs is crucial in this*
- *RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: Keeping track of examples and your notes – effective notetaking*
- *APPLICATION: accessing the material and using the framework and theories learned in this course. Material is transferable, as is your knowledge.*

For Paper 1: Section A you are required to have researched not merely each product (the Score print advertisement, Sephora; music videos etc.) but *to have considered a range of similar products and the way that such products use media language to shape representations that ultimately impact on their meaning and response.*

The purpose of these EDUSITES units is to outline the main ideas and key issues that surround the CSP products in each section. You must then use these considerations as one starting point for your own research.

This involves:

- Researching the CSPs and similar products
- Considering the theoretical framework from the Core Framework Units that are most applicable
- Exploring your own hypotheses by testing each product against the relevant theories.

The lessons in this unit and later ones are better viewed as jumping off points. Remember, AQA state:

- *The focus of study is not the products themselves but, rather, the theoretical framework and contexts of media. Exam questions will focus on the theoretical framework and contexts of the media, but students will be expected to answer with reference to, or analysis of, relevant CSPs.*
- *These products should be seen as a vehicle for the delivery of the specification, rather than products to be 'learned' in detail*

Can you de-construct the use of media language - *the ways in which the images, text, graphics, icons music, lighting, performance work to construct a narrative for the product?*

- Can you break down the intended meaning of the product – *how its representations are intended to shape audience response* – and how audiences decode and respond to this?

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- Can you consider the impact of context – *the world the product was created in and for* – on the shape of the product and its ideas, its values?

Can you explore the industry that created the product – its place in our culture and its driving forces

Lesson 4 - Score

Score was published in 1967. *It can be researched productively by considering its historical, social and cultural contexts, particularly as it relates to gender roles, sexuality and the historical context of advertising techniques*

The Score hair cream advert is an historical artefact from 1967; as such, it can be examined productively by considering its historical, social and cultural contexts, particularly as it relates to gender roles, sexuality and the historical context of advertising techniques.

1967 can be seen as a period of slow transformation in Western cultures with legislation about and changing attitudes to the role of women – and men – in society, something that the advert can be seen to negotiate. Produced in the year of decriminalisation of homosexuality, the representation of heterosexuality could be read as signalling more anxiety than might first appear. The reference to colonialist values can also be linked to social and cultural contexts of the ending of Empire. The advertising techniques of fifty years ago are fundamentally similar to today – if more explicit.

For the targeted CSP we must consider the way in which media language – *signs; narrative; semiotic analysis* – constructs 'how' the audience is to receive the message about the product but also (1) how the target audience is indicated and positioned and (2) the way that these are 'typical' of such advertising then and the changes since that time in current adverts for such products.

- Investigate the technical codes used and the effect they have on the audience.
- A study of narrative codes is important in a consideration of how the product connects to the audience.
- semiotic analysis to deconstruct and consider their function in creating the brand.
- Analyse how Score audience is positioned. What image of Score is projected? Find examples of different narrative structures. What are the genre features of the advert?
- How does Score use the genre features to project messages and brand?

Discussion of the past in terms of media products always turns to it as a time of very different values and ideas as to what might be acceptable and what goes beyond the ideas of honesty and truthfulness we hold current advertisements and advertisers to.

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Products aimed at men always emphasised sexual prowess and manliness with women as simple objects of desire. This is now seen as toxic masculinity, so we do have to hold in mind the fact that ideas of masculinity and femininity pre the 1970s Equal Rights movement were represented in the most basic forms.

For the Score CSP, as with most products of this era, the message is shockingly straightforward and blatant: a man's sexual appeal is improved by using this product.

- Advertising conventions – *the repeated use of familiar signs and constructions* - are used to ensure that images in advertisements offer assurances that their attached ideas and understandings are effective in selling products to consumers
- The use of such well-trodden conventions and signification relies on a shared audience cultural understanding of elements such as the interpretation of colours (*blue for masculine; pink for feminine; green for envy etc.*) and images. It may also refer to shared cultural ideas or memories such as popular films, celebrities, or conjuring a sense of nostalgia or of an era and its values.

Think of how all of our media appear to offer the same take on ideas of beauty or success. How they all echo ideas of how we look at the world around us – what makes a celebrity, what offends us, what is acceptable, what our concerns should be.

These may be ideas from smoking to immigration, from environmental issues to equal rights. Our advertisements reflect who we are, how we should live - what our lives are like, what they could be like, or even what they should be like.

A study of the media is a study of how these permeate into media products to represent the world to audiences and consumers. Their objective is sales and profit, but in tapping into common ideas to reach a broad audience, they add to the seeming truth of the ideas they repeat, creating a cycle of 'truth' and 'representation' that reinforce and offer credibility to each other.

An issue for fragrance manufacturers in the mid-sixties was that male fragrances were seen either as 'effeminate' or the preserve of the wealthy middle-class.

Manufacturers like Faberge understood that if they could find a way of making male fragrances acceptable to the ordinary man in the street there was a vast untapped commercial market. The idea of the Brut campaign was to position their newly created 'affordable' fragrance in a way that men could relate to it and see it as part of their own grooming habits.

To do so, they focused their campaign on using sporting celebrities with appeal to ordinary working men. Henry Cooper, an incredibly popular and successful boxer of the time, had strong working-class roots and was seen as a 'man of the people' and was referred to be tabloid press as '*the peoples champion*' and '*Our Henry*'. The catchphrase of '*splash it all over*' carried the idea of men seeing the

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fragrance as affordable and its carefree use far removed from ideas of class and refinement as being nothing exceptional or special.

The success of the campaign established the brand and was quickly followed by similar campaigns featuring one of the world's most successful footballers, Kevin Keegan. Keegan's image was similarly that of a man of the people, a down to earth man.

Lesson 5 - Score - Context

The past is another country... goes the saying. Certainly, in studying what are 'historical products' we need to keep foremost that as times change so do cultures and their values. What was once acceptable is no longer tolerated – attitudes to ethnicity, gender, smoking, drugs – and what was once unacceptable is now widely viewed as normal – divorce; graphic representation of violence etc.

In studying media products, we need to be aware of the wider changes and those specific to the particular media form. The British Board of Film Censors have stated that "a film which was given their "A" rating (adult) in 1913 would "probably get a PG or even a U now".

The 1960s was an era of a world emerging from a lengthy post WW2 period of conservatism and tradition into a decade that would usher in a vast social-political revolution. The evolution was heralded by a new and vibrant youth culture that moved from a concern with music and fashion of the late fifties and early sixties into a more widely aware generation of political action using civil unrest to challenge the old ways. The sixties was the age of the flowering of global social activism, with particular emphasis on Civil rights, anti-war protests, and the Second-Wave of feminism.

The era shifted large areas of society – challenges to laws on homosexuality, divorce, sexuality, drugs, capital punishment, education, health care and human rights.

Researching an era enables you to understand and be able to respond to tasks requiring you to connect the set products to their times

Lesson 6 - Representations

Barthes model (EDUSITES [Core Unit Media Language+](#)) of the construction of myths of politicians and products would see that the Score CSP seeks to apply 'the myth of masculinity' – how audiences expect or anticipate men to be represented. By representing men in this way, they evoke established and well-used collective memories of masculinity – applying a dominant, accepted template to the product to make a meaning connection with their audience, both men and women.

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This is how media products work, in particular advertising. All media products try to attach established ideas, the meanings audiences have in common about the world we live in.

Using established signs associated with commonly held meanings attaches what audiences believe to be *truths* or, as Barthes has it, *the myths of common-sense* - things we all 'know' and take for granted. The era of the CSP product *Score* was one in which men were expected to be rugged – the film stars of the era were, John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, Richard Burton etc. The sports stars were similarly rugged, the England World cup winning team, Henry Cooper etc. The presumption was of men as overtly masculine and strong rather than the softer styles that were soon to emerge.

The mid-sixties saw the emergence of a more sophisticated masculinity in heroes such as Sean Connery in the then recently established James Bond films. However, this too remained one which presented men as sexually powerful and dominant. The evolving feminist and women's liberation had made some inroads into popular culture but was in embryonic stage.

Employment laws that existed did not include equal pay. A woman's role was seen by most as similar to that of the 1950s of being the homemaker, whilst a man's role was in work, career, and in being the head of the house.

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