OCR

A-level

MEDIA STUDIES

SECOND EDITION

+ Plan and organise your revision
+ Reinforce skills and understanding
+ Practise exam-style questions

Michael Rodgers

My revision planner

		REVISED	TESTED	EXAM READY

Now test yourself answers and Exam practice answers at
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Check your understanding and progress at www.hoddereducation.co.uk/myrevisionnotes

Countdown to my exams

6–8 weeks to go

+ Start by looking at the specification – make sure you know exactly what material you need to revise and the style of the examination. Use the revision planner on pages 4 and 5 to familiarise yourself with the topics.
+ Organise your notes, making sure you have covered everything on the specification. The revision planner will help you to group your notes into topics.
+ Work out a realistic revision plan that will allow you time for relaxation. Set aside days and times for all the subjects that you need to study and stick to your timetable.
+ Set yourself sensible targets. Break your revision down into focused sessions of around 40 minutes, divided by breaks. These Revision Notes organise the basic facts into short, memorable sections to make revising easier.

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2–6 weeks to go

+ Read through the relevant sections of this book and refer to the exam tips, exam summaries, typical mistakes and key terms. Tick off the topics as you feel confident about them. Highlight those topics you find difficult and look at them again in detail.
+ Test your understanding of each topic by working through the 'Now test yourself' questions in the book. Look up the answers online at **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/ myrevisionnotesdownloads**
+ Make a note of any problem areas as you revise and ask your teacher to go over these in class.
+ Look at past papers. They are one of the best ways to revise and practise your exam skills. Write or prepare planned answers to the exam practice questions provided in this book. Check your answers online at **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/ myrevisionnotesdownloads**
+ Use the revision activities to try out different revision methods. For example, you can make notes using mind maps, spider diagrams or flash cards.
+ Track your progress using the revision planner and give yourself a reward when you have achieved your target.

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One week to go

+ Try to fit in at least one more timed practice of an entire past paper and seek feedback from your teacher, comparing your work closely with the mark scheme.
+ Check the revision planner to make sure you haven't missed out any topics. Brush up on any areas of difficulty by talking them over with a friend or getting help from your teacher.
+ Attend any revision classes put on by your teacher. Remember, they are an expert at preparing people for examinations.

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The day before the examination

+ Flick through these Revision Notes for useful reminders – for example, the exam tips, exam summaries, typical mistakes and key terms.
+ IMPORTANT: Check the time (is it morning or afternoon?) and place of your examination. Keep in touch with other students in your class.
+ Make sure you have everything you need for the exam – extra pens and pencils, tissues, a watch, bottled water, sweets.
+ Allow some time to relax and have an early night to ensure you are fresh and alert for the examination.

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My exams

Paper 1: Media messages

Date:...

Time: ....

Location: ....

Paper 2: Evolving media

Date:...

Time: ....

Location: ....

Introduction

In your A-level Media Studies course you will have learned about:

+ the nine media forms
+ the set products in each form
+ the three in-depth studies in online newspapers, print newspapers and long form TV drama
+ the theoretical framework covering media language, audiences, industries and representations
+ the theories that apply to each area of the framework
+ the media contexts – social, cultural, political, economic and historical – that influence media products.

This Revision Guide will take you through this content by working through the questions in the two exams that assess:

+ your knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework and/or media contexts and their influence on the media
+ your application of knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to:
    + **analyse** products (including in relation to their **contexts** and using media **theories**)
    + **evaluate academic theories**
    + make **judgements** and draw **conclusions**.

You only need to be able to use and evaluate theories in relation to your three in-depth studies:

+ newspapers – the *Daily Mail* and the *Guardian*
+ online, social and participatory media – the *Mail Online* and the *Guardian* websites, plus their social media feeds
+ television – long form television drama (one US, one European).

For each of these in-depth studies you need to apply the whole of the theoretical framework – media language, audiences, industries and representations – plus any media context.

You only cover some areas of the framework and some contexts for the other six media forms:

Media form	Set product	Area of framework	Contexts
Film	*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021)	Industries	Economic, Historical
Advertising and marketing	Baby Dove, River Island, Shelter	Media Language, Representations	Social, Cultural
Radio	*The BBC Radio 1 Breakfast Show*	Industries, Audiences	Economic, Political, Cultural
Magazines	*The Big Issue*	Media Language, Representations	Social, Cultural, Political
Video games	*Animal Crossing: New Horizons*	Industries, Audiences	Economic, Social
Music video	Two videos chosen from two set lists	Media Language, Representations	Social, Cultural

This Revision Guide will take you through each question looking at the content you may need to know.

It includes exam practice questions, for which sample answers are available so you can see how the questions may be set out and what you would have to do to answer them.

Check your understanding and progress at www.hoddereducation.co.uk/myrevisionnotes

What you have to do in the exam

The exam papers

You will have to complete two examination papers, each worth 35 per cent of your final grade and each lasting 2 hours:

+ Paper 1: Media messages
+ Paper 2: Evolving media

You are expected to complete **all** the questions in each paper.

Paper 1 Media messages 70 marks 6 questions	**Section A: News** **Two** in-depth studies: + newspapers + online, social and participatory media. Some questions will relate to unseen sources on newspapers and/or online, social and participatory media.	+ Knowledge and understanding of the **whole framework** and **contexts**: 15 marks + **Analysis** (including **theories**)/**theory evaluation**/**judgements and conclusions**: 30 marks	+ **One** 15-mark questions + **Three** 10-mark question **Total:** 45 marks
	Section B: Media language and representations **Three** media forms: + advertising and marketing + magazines + music videos. Some questions will relate to unseen sources: either advertising and marketing or magazines. You may have to compare the set advertising and marketing products you have studied with the unseen sources.	+ Knowledge and understanding of **media language** and **representations**: 10 marks + **Analysis**/**judgements and conclusions**: 15 marks	+ **One** 10-mark question + **One** 15-mark question **Total:** 25 marks
Paper 2 Evolving media 70 marks 4 questions	**Section A: Media industries and audiences** **Three** media forms: + radio + video games + film (industries only).	+ Knowledge and understanding of **media industries** and **audiences** and **contexts**: 30 marks	+ **Two** 15-mark questions **Total:** 30 marks
	Section B: Long form TV drama One in-depth study: + television. Question 3 of Paper 2 is worth 30 marks and will require you to draw upon your knowledge and understanding from the whole course of study.	+ Knowledge and understanding of the **whole framework** and **contexts**: 10 marks + **Analysis** (including **contexts** and **theories**)/**theory evaluation**/**judgements and conclusions**: 30 marks	+ **One** 10-mark question + **One** 30-mark question **Total:** 40 marks

+ Knowledge and understanding questions will require knowledge about the media form **as a whole**, with reference to the set products.
+ Analysis questions will be about unseen sources in the exam (Paper 1) or the set products you have studied (Paper 2 – Section B).
+ Any analysis question can ask you to analyse in relation to media **contexts**.

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Paper 1 – Section A: News

What you have to do

This section of the exam asks four questions on your study of news across two media forms:

1 an in-depth study of online newspapers, with the set products being the *Mail Online* and the *Guardian* websites, and their use of social and participatory media such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook
2 an in-depth study of print newspapers, with the *Daily Mail* and the *Guardian* as the set products.

Which areas of the theoretical framework must I study?	
Online newspapers	The whole theoretical framework: + media language + representations + industries + audiences Social, cultural, economic, political and historical contexts Academic ideas and arguments (theories)
Print newspapers	The whole theoretical framework: + media language + representations + industries + audiences Social, cultural, economic, political and historical contexts Academic ideas and arguments (theories)

The four questions in Section A will be as follows:

Q1	10 marks	This question will ask you to analyse the media language or the representations in two sources, using the work of one theorist. The sources will be extracts from different genres of online or print newspapers, and may include one of the set products. This short essay should take about 17 minutes to plan and write.
Q2	15 marks	This will be a complex question including a number of bullet points asking you to: + show knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework as it applies to news + analyse the two sources provided, usually their use of media language and/or representation + make judgements and draw conclusions. This extended essay should take about 25 minutes to plan and write.
Q3	10 marks	This question asks you to show knowledge and understanding of the influence of media contexts on print and/or online news, including your set products. This short essay should take about 17 minutes to plan and write.
Q4	10 marks	This question asks you to evaluate an academic theory in relation to news – how useful is it in understanding news? Usually, you are given a choice between two theories. This short essay should take about 17 minutes to plan and write.

Questions 1 and 2

What these questions involve

You will be given two sources to analyse in the exam. The two sources may be extracts from print newspapers, from newspaper websites, or from newspaper social media feeds such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

The two sources cannot be both of the two set products – the *Daily Mail* and the *Guardian*. At least one source will be a newspaper that you might not have studied in any depth, because these questions will be testing your ability to analyse any newspapers based on your knowledge and understanding of the media form as a whole.

Question 1 usually asks for analysis of the two sources, with the focus on media language or representations. It usually requires you to use a specific concept or theory in your analysis.

Question 2 tests your knowledge and understanding of print and/or online newspapers as media forms, tests your analysis skills, and also asks you to make judgements and draw conclusions. The question usually asks you to analyse media language or representations; if Question 1 is on representations, it will probably ask you to analyse media language (and vice versa).

Timing

These two questions will be 10-mark or 15-mark questions.

If Question 1 is a 10-mark question, you should spend about 17 minutes answering this question.

If Question 2 is a 15-mark question, you should spend about 25 minutes answering this question.

What the examiner is looking for

In Question 1, the examiner is looking for:
+ how well you apply your knowledge of the area of the theoretical framework (e.g. media language or representations) to analyse the two sources
+ how convincingly, accurately and perceptively you analyse the sources, with logical connections and lines of reasoning in your answer – you should analyse both sources equally and not just concentrate on one
+ how well you make use of the theory or concept – you should not give a general account of the theory, or evaluate it, but briefly show how it applies in your analysis
+ the detail and accuracy of your references to the sources and your use of terminology.

In Question 2, the examiner is looking for:
+ knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework
+ how accurately and relevantly you use Media Studies terminology
+ how well you apply your knowledge of the area of the theoretical framework (such as media language or representations) to analyse the two sources
+ how convincingly, accurately and perceptively you analyse the sources, with logical connections and lines of reasoning
+ how accomplished and developed are your judgements and conclusions.

Extended response questions

The asterisk (*) next to Question 2 is to signpost that this is an extended response answer, meaning that you will be marked on the quality of your essay:

+ how well you develop a line of reasoning – try to plan, however briefly
+ how relevant your answer is throughout – answer the question, don't just throw everything you know at the answer
+ how well you provide evidence for the points you make – use examples from both sources.

Making judgements and reaching conclusions

A relevant, well-structured essay will help with making judgements and reaching conclusions. If a question asks 'how far' something is true, or whether or not you agree with a statement, then this should be the focus of your conclusion, which one bullet point will ask you to provide.

There is no 'right answer' to these questions, with which you have to agree. Nuance is good: careful and thoughtful views will be rewarded more highly than simple assertions. This means:

+ it would be good practice to offer some counter-argument within the essay and test ideas against the evidence before coming to a conclusion based on your analysis
+ your conclusion can argue that both sides of an argument are correct to some extent.

However, if you see immediately that the analysis would point to a definite conclusion to a particular question, it is perfectly fine to start the essay with a strong assertion of this conclusion. This is because a confident beginning to an essay often suggests to the examiner that this might be a high-quality essay.

You may find it useful to end this type of essay with a paragraph starting with the phrase 'In conclusion' – reminding you to reach a conclusion and signalling to the examiner that you are drawing one. Try not to repeat yourself at length, however, as this is wasting time. A short summary should suffice.

> **Exam tip**
>
> A line of reasoning, relevance and evidence make for a good answer to any of the questions in a Media Studies exam so, in practice, you just need to write longer answers for questions offering more marks.

Exam practice

Extract 1:

Extract 2:

Question 1

Analyse the representations in these front pages referring to historical contexts and to Gilroy's theories.

[10]

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Question 2*

The *Daily Mail* and the *Mirror* are both tabloid newspapers. How far do the extracts show that genre conventions always remain the same?

In your answer you must:
+ explain how the genre conventions of newspapers have changed or remained the same over time
+ analyse the use of genre conventions in the extracts
+ make judgements and reach conclusions. [15]

Bullet-pointed questions

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Look again at the three bullet points in Question 2 above. They tell you exactly what the examiners are looking for in your answer and state everything you have to do to meet the demands of the mark scheme. Bullet 1 is worth 5 of the 15 marks and bullets 2 and 3 together are worth 10 of the 15 marks available.

Exam tip

Simply repeating or rephrasing the question in an opening paragraph often suggests a middling or low-quality answer. Examiners always mark each answer on its merits, but a good initial impression cannot do any harm, so try to start your essay by answering the question.

Recommended revision for these questions

You need to practise textual analysis of a range of different newspapers, looking especially at media language and representation.

For media **language**, you should:
+ analyse and explain the combination of elements to create meaning using semiotics
+ study a range of newspapers to become familiar with the genre conventions of print and online newspapers, looking at variations, change over time, hybridity and challenging/subverting conventions
+ compare a range of print and online newspapers in order to understand the relationship between media language and technology
+ analyse and explain examples of intertextuality
+ analyse and explain the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies
+ practise applying the ideas of **Barthes**, **Todorov**, **Levi-Strauss**, **Neale** and **Baudrillard** in analysing newspapers
+ analyse and explain media language in newspapers in terms of media contexts.

Semiotics The study of signs (see Barthes in the Academic Theories PDF at: **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/myrevisionnotesdownloads**).

Genre conventions The shared understandings of which elements fit in which genres.

Genre hybridity The stable mixing of different genres in one product.

Intertextuality Media products (texts) that refer to other media products.

Ideologies Sets of beliefs, values and assumptions shared by a social group and embedded in social, cultural, political and economic institutions. Usually thought to reflect the interests of powerful groups. Consumerism, freedom, equality and individualism are often considered dominant ideologies in free market capitalist societies as they reflect the economic basis of these societies.

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For media **representations**, you should:
✚ analyse and explain how selection and combination create representations of events, issues, individuals and social groups
✚ analyse and explain how news makes claims about realism and constructs versions of reality
✚ analyse and explain the impact of the media industry and social, cultural and historical contexts on how producers choose to represent events, issues, individuals and social groups
✚ analyse and explain positive and negative uses of stereotyping
✚ analyse and explain how social groups may be under-represented or misrepresented
✚ analyse and explain 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 the ideas of **Hall**, **Gauntlett**, **Butler**, **Van Zoonen**, **hooks** and **Gilroy** in analysing newspapers.

> **Exam tip**
>
> The specification lists the subject content in section 2e of the document. It is important you read through the subject content to check you understand all the wording, as this wording might be used in exam questions.

> **Realism** Realism is the set of conventions by which audiences accept a representation as 'real' or 'realistic'. There are different sets of rules for different genres and for different media forms, and there are many different forms of realism.
>
> **Stereotyping** A commonly repeated generalisation about a group, event or institution that carries judgements, either positive or negative, and assumes any example of this group, event or institution will fit the stereotype. This generalisation is inaccurate because it is an oversimplification, even if it is based in reality. It can refer to a representation that comprises a simple stereotyped characteristic rather than a complex and individualised set of characteristics.
>
> **Discourses** A system of shared knowledge embedded in social institutions, such as medicine, that exercise power over people.
>
> **Positioning audiences** How products try to put their audiences in particular positions. This might be emotional positioning (e.g. making them feel fear or sympathy), cognitive positioning (how they think about representations in the products), social positioning (e.g. as males or females) or cultural positioning (e.g. being positioned as British or American).

For Question 2, revise media audiences and media industries as well, as they could be covered in the first bullet point about the media form. However, these two areas will be dealt with under Question 3, as they are best understood in relation to their contexts, which Question 3 is likely to ask about.

> **Exam tip**
>
> You may be asked to discuss media language or representations in either Question 1 or Question 2.
>
> Question 1 in the exam practice above is an **analysis** question, so you may be asked to **apply** your knowledge and understanding of media language or representations when analysing the unseen sources you are given in the exam.
>
> Question 2 in the exam practice above is both a **knowledge** and **understanding** question on the whole media form (the first bullet point) and an analysis question based on the sources (the second and third bullet points).

Newspapers

Newspapers: media language

Semiotics – combining elements to create meaning

The media language elements in print newspapers include:
+ colour
+ layout (e.g. page size, the masthead, the skyline, use of columns, headlines, image, space)
+ images (e.g. photography, graphics, cartoons)
+ language use (e.g. formal and informal registers, mode of address)
+ typography (e.g. serif and sans-serif typefaces/fonts, gothic typefaces/fonts).

> **Masthead** Often used to describe the title of a printed publication (though technically it is the title above the editorial).
>
> **Skyline** A line of text or boxes (sometimes called skyboxes) above the masthead promoting other content in a newspaper.
>
> **Formal and informal language registers** A formal language register is used in formal situations, e.g. in a lecture, to communicate information, and may include complex sentences and an elaborate vocabulary. An informal language register is used in informal situations, e.g. in a chat with a friend, to communicate the relationship between the participants, and uses simple language including slang.
>
> **Mode of address** How a media product addresses its audience. This might be warm and inclusive, or formal and objective, for example, as in tabloid and broadsheet newspapers.
>
> **Serif and sans-serif typefaces/fonts** Serifs are small ornaments on fonts, sans-serif fonts do not have these so look cleaner and more modern. A typeface is a family of fonts. Arial is a common sans-serif typeface. Times New Roman is a common serif typeface.

Media language elements in online newspapers and their social media feeds include all of the above, plus:
+ elements of specifically webpage layout (e.g. page size and margins, headers and footers, navigation bars, tabs)
+ functionality (e.g. hyperlinks, embedded audio/visual content, interactivity)
+ media language elements determined by the social media site (e.g. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram house styles).

Semiotics or semiology is the study of signs. There are many different versions of semiology/semiotics, but this need not concern us here. Meaning is created by difference (how one sign is different to another) and combination (how signs are put together, such as words in a sentence).

Barthes put forward this theory of the different levels of signs (he called them 'orders') in the 1960s:
+ A sign consists of a signifier (a word, an image, a sound) and its meaning – the signified.
+ The denotation of a sign is its literal meaning. For example, the word 'dog' denotes a mammal that barks.
+ Denotations signify connotations – the associations of the denotation. For example, we need to make up the rather strange word 'dogness' to suggest the thoughts and feelings associated with dogs. Connotations are often expressed as nouns in this way.

> **Sign** Any unit of language that designates an object or phenomenon. It consists of a signifier (a word, an image, a sound) and its meaning – the signified.
>
> **Denotation** The literal meaning of a sign.
>
> **Connotation** The associations of the denotation. Often expressed as nouns. May vary in their meaning – be 'polysemic'. For example, the sign 'dog' connotes 'dogness', which could mean 'warmth and devotion' or 'fear and danger'.

+ Denotations and connotations are organised into **myths** – the ideological meaning. These make ideology seem 'natural'. For example, an image of a bulldog might activate a myth of Britishness.

This all sounds complicated, but in practice you simply have to analyse front pages, websites or social media feeds from newspapers by:
+ explaining why each key element has been selected (imagine it replaced with the opposite)
+ explaining why each key element has been combined with the other elements (especially the **anchorage** effect of written language)
+ suggesting the connotations of these combinations
+ suggesting the ideologies activated by this media language (see the section on media language – the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies).

> **Myth** The organisation of meanings into commonly repeated forms that express ideology (e.g. the myth of Britishness may be signified by bulldogs, Union Flags, the monarchy, Big Ben).
>
> **Anchorage** Use of language to 'anchor' (fix) the meaning of an image to suit the purposes of the producer.

Example: the *Sun*'s 'Gotcha' headline

The *Sun* used this headline for the story of an attack on two Argentinian warships during the Falklands conflict of 1982. It was changed for later editions when the large number of sailors killed became known. The headline is combined with two photographs of Argentinian warships; these are long shots, a detached observer's point of view that tries to minimise any emotional involvement the audience might feel with dead sailors.

The headline implies '*we* got *you*', positioning the audience on the side of the attackers. The slang term 'gotcha' rather than 'got you' connotes a heightened emotional involvement in the attack and triumphant identification with the British armed forces personnel. This one word activates ideologies of nationalism and militarism – the patriotic pride in the military that was aroused in some sections of the population during this controversial conflict.

Imagine the page with the opposite connotations and ideologies. For example, in a pacifist version the headline might read 'Slaughter' and anchor images of grieving relatives.

(The front page may be found at: **https://editdesk.wordpress.com/2009/08/28/memorable-headlines-gotcha/**.)

Example: the *Mail Online* logo

Mail Online

Figure 1.1 The *Mail Online* logo

Selection and combination are evident in the two very different fonts used for the *Mail Online* masthead.

The word 'Mail' uses a heavy gothic font that is the font used for the masthead in the print edition. This connotes tradition, craft, solidity, reliability and other such virtues from its association with medieval calligraphy. This is a masthead font style that the *Daily Mail* shares with another staunchly conservative newspaper, the *Daily Telegraph*.

The word 'Online' uses a contrasting font. It is elegant, sans-serif and seems to stand tall. It connotes modernity, lightness and youth, especially when compared to the heavy gothic font.

The combination of the two fonts tries to connote that the *Mail Online* combines the reliable virtues of print journalism with the fast-moving online world. This also combines two ideologies, that of conservatism (a belief in conserving existing institutions) and modernism (a belief in change and progress), which are usually held to be opposites.

> **Revision activity**
>
> Revisit your set products – the *Guardian* and the *Mail* print and online editions and use of social media – and note how this semiotic analysis can apply to the whole front pages of these set products.

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Print newspaper genre conventions

The traditional genre classification for print newspapers referred to their paper size – broadsheet or tabloid. By the 1970s most of the more downmarket popular press had adopted tabloid size paper – half the size of the traditional broadsheet size – as it was cheaper to print, had a more accessible feel, and enabled the newspaper to fill the page with photographs or **banner headlines** for impact. The more upmarket quality press chose to retain the broadsheet format as it retained an element of formality and served to demarcate the quality press from the popular press.

The terms 'broadsheet' and 'tabloid' are still in common use to describe the style of a newspaper, although few newspapers (the *Daily Telegraph* and *Financial Times*, for example) are still printed in the broadsheet format. The quality press that have moved over to the tabloid size (such as the *Guardian*) sometimes refer to their format as 'compact', as they feel the term 'tabloid' carries negative connotations of sensationalism and gutter journalism.

The genre conventions of tabloid and broadsheet newspapers are presented in the following table.

Print newspaper genre conventions table	
Tabloid	**Broadsheet**
Softer news agenda – e.g. human-interest stories, celebrities	Harder news agenda – e.g. politics, finance, international news
Less formal language register	More formal language register
Bold mastheads in sans-serif, often white on red	Traditional mastheads in serif fonts, often black on white
Headlines (often banner) in bold, capitalised sans-serif fonts	Headlines in serif fonts capitalised as in a sentence
Pages dominated by headlines and images	Pages dominated by **copy**
Addresses a more downmarket (primarily working class) audience	Addresses a more upmarket (primarily middle class) audience
Offers news as entertainment	Offers news as information

This simple division does not always work in practice:
+ newspapers such as the *Daily Mail* position themselves as mid-market, combining conventions of both the tabloids and broadsheets
+ some traditionally 'tabloid' features – such as extensive use of photography, human-interest stories and stories about celebrities, are increasingly common in the broadsheet press. This process is sometimes called 'broadloidisation'.

The following newspapers are considered the 'quality press' or 'broadsheets':
+ *The Times* and *Sunday Times*
+ the *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*
+ the *Guardian* and *Observer*
+ the *Financial Times*
+ the *Independent* (now online only).

The following newspapers are considered the 'popular press' or 'red-top tabloids':
+ the *Sun* and *Sun on Sunday*
+ the *Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Mirror*
+ the *Daily Star* and *Daily Star Sunday*.

One newspaper – the *i* – is an unusual hybrid in that it was launched as the compact sister of the *Independent*, though it has now changed ownership. It offers a short, cheaper version of a quality newspaper.

Banner headlines Large headlines that fit the width of the printed page.

Copy/body copy The written element of a newspaper or advertisement. Body copy is the main body of a newspaper article.

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Two other newspaper titles are considered to be middle-market tabloids:
+ the *Daily Mail* and *Mail on Sunday*
+ the *Daily Express* and *Sunday Express*.

These lie in between the quality press and red-top tabloids in that:
+ they may deliver more hard news than the other tabloids
+ their media language is a hybrid of tabloid and broadsheet conventions.

Daily Mail hybrid conventions
Mix of hard and soft news
More formal than the popular press, more opinionated than the quality press
Traditional serif masthead
Capitalised, often banner headlines
Front page dominated by headlines and images but usually with some copy
Addresses a middle-market (lower middle class and skilled working class) audience
A mix of both news and entertainment

Newspapers can vary from their house style and genre conventions on occasions. The day after the 9/11 attacks on the twin towers in New York, for example, the *Guardian* ran a full-page picture story with the image of the burning building, disrupting the usual layout. The day after a photograph of a drowned refugee boy was released, the *Daily Mail* ran a full-page picture story (3 September 2015) using the photograph, with the following headline in a lower-case font that challenged the genre conventions and house style: 'Tiny victim of a human catastrophe'. The muted media language fitted the sympathetic tone of the headline.

Online newspaper genre conventions

The traditional classification of print newspapers as broadsheet and tabloid extends at least in part to their online editions, though here the process of hybridisation continues even further.

Broadsheet newspapers online all tend to follow a similar format, which echoes the connotations of objectivity and seriousness in the print newspapers:
+ the home page of the website is filled with headlines, with hard news stories towards the top of the home page
+ the same traditional masthead is used as in the print edition
+ most home pages in their PC editions use a four- or five-column layout, which fills the home page with news
+ most typography is serif
+ although the pages consist of mostly headlines and standfirsts there is more copy than in the tabloid newspapers.

The home pages of broadsheet newspapers do contain many more hybrid features:
+ there is more extensive use of colour
+ opinion, lifestyle and sports pieces appear on the home page – these would be buried inside the print newspaper or in supplements
+ there is some use of sans-serif fonts.

Tabloid newspapers online also mirror some conventions of their print versions and hybridise others. Conventions shared with the print editions include:
+ lifestyle, 'showbiz' and human-interest stories feature prominently towards the top of the home pages
+ fonts are sans-serif
+ there is use of saturated colour, especially red
+ photography dominates the home pages

Middle-market tabloids
Generic hybrid newspapers that share conventions of both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers to target a middle-market audience.

Revision activity

Analyse the front pages of the different daily newspapers listed on page 15 in terms of how far they follow broadsheet or red-top tabloid conventions, using the print newspaper genre conventions table on the same page. Make notes on any variations from these conventions and try to explain why they occur. Pay particular attention to your set products: the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*.

Standfirst A block of text that introduces a newspaper story under the headline, normally in a different style (often bold) to the body copy and headline.

- the language register is more informal
- the *Mirror*, *Star* and *Sun* all use the same red-top masthead as the print newspaper.

Hybridised features:
- there is little use of banner headlines, rather a large number of headlines are offered, connoting 'newsiness'
- most headlines are not capitalised (except in the *Sun*)
- the home page layout is generally less photograph/image and headline dominated than the print front page
- the large number of headlines means that some hard news stories are covered on the home page that might only make the inside pages of the print newspaper.

Print and online technology and media language

These hybridised features in online tabloid newspapers might reflect the influence of online technology: large capitalised banner headlines, for example, would be the equivalent of shouting in an online environment, whereas they are appropriate for the front page of a print newspaper to be quickly scanned by possible customers in a shop. Online headlines, such as those in the *Mail Online*, are often much longer than those in the print newspaper; this may be due to their role in attracting clickthroughs from the home page or to act as 'clickbait' in social media or news feeds, which means they have to explain more of the narrative hook in the headline.

The large number of headlines in the online editions of all newspapers reflects audience expectations of a cornucopia of choice in the online media, whereas print readers are more content to be guided by the layout of the newspaper as to the hierarchy of stories. The online media are less effective at showing photographs compared to the print media, so photographs online tend to be cropped more as close-ups and smaller scale.

The newspaper home pages follow many online conventions and offer the usual functionality of the webpage, suggesting that the media form is as powerful an influence as the genre of newspapers in the choice of media language.

Intertextuality in media language

You should be able to analyse why media products use intertextuality. The reasons are as varied as the uses of intertextuality so you need to be able to analyse its use in context rather than applying pre-learned ideas.

However, some common uses of intertextuality include:
- to create humour
- to parody (criticise) the referred text or person (e.g. political cartoons)
- to honour the referred text (e.g. reference to universally revered people or texts)
- to create a flattering mode of address for the audience – the product may be assuming that they are clever or well informed enough to understand the intertextual reference
- to attempt to transfer the value of the referred media product to the referring one (e.g. a newspaper quoting Shakespeare or references to currently high-status celebrities)
- to create a sense of shared experience with the audience (e.g. reviews of last night's television).

Headlines and standfirsts are often good sources of examples of intertextuality in the news sections of newspapers as they have to draw

attention and summarise in a pithy manner. For example, the 3 March 2018 edition of the *Guardian* contains the following instances:

+ 'Oscars so right?' – an intertextual reference to the 'Oscars so White' hashtag, which was current at the time, which combines humour in the pun with a flattering assumption that the readers would understand it
+ 'Walk on the poetic side: Lou Reed's lost verse published' – an intertextual reference to Lou Reed's song 'Walk on the Wild Side', which suggests homage to the original
+ 'MI5 agents licensed to commit crime in UK' – an intertextual reference to James Bond, which suggests a similar level of lack of regulation of spies to that shown in Bond films.

The opinion section yields:

+ 'Will we get a sleeping beauty or our first woke princess?' – punning intertextual references to children's fairy tales for an article about Meghan Markle, who was then about to join the royal family, which surprises with this unlikely conjunction of connotations
+ 'Don't cry for Theresa May. The truth is, this is her fault' – an intertextual reference to the lines 'Don't cry for me Argentina, the truth is I never left you' from the musical *Evita*, which works by replacing the expected gentle second line with a brutal one. Theresa May was an embattled Tory prime minister at the time.

Viewpoints and ideologies in media language

'Viewpoints and ideologies' crop up in both media language and representations, and will be covered in more detail in the latter. For media language, you need to be able to analyse how the choice of media language is never neutral. This is true whether or not the viewpoints being expressed are obvious. Let us take one example where the viewpoint/ideology is not obvious and one in which it is obvious.

For the more obvious example, let's take the *Daily Mail* front page for 13 June 2016, just before the referendum to leave or remain in the EU, when the headline read, 'FURY OVER PLOT TO LET 1.5M TURKS INTO BRITAIN'. This choice of language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies in a few words. The headline connotes that there is a plot, that it is right and proper to be angry about these plotters, that immigration is a bad thing, that Turkish people are particularly bad immigrants, possibly because they may be Muslims (the language may be read by the audience as racist, **xenophobic** and Islamophobic, even if these are not intended), that the plotters are most probably the 'metropolitan liberal elite' who are soft on immigration, too friendly with the EU, and never to be trusted. The ideologies at play here are British, or perhaps English, nationalism (the belief in the superiority of the British/English nation) and social conservatism (the belief in the role of the common people in maintaining traditional values and resisting social liberalism). It is, in fact, newspapers such as the *Guardian* that represent the ideologies of internationalism and social liberalism that the *Daily Mail* wants to resist.

A contrasting example from the *Mail* stable comes from the *Mail Online*'s reporting of nurses voting to strike in 2022. Strikes are always 'bad' in the *Mail*'s viewpoint, but nurses are usually 'good', and the media language reflects this contradiction. The main headline reads: 'Nurses WILL strike! More winter chaos ahead …', which expresses surprise, through the capitals and exclamation mark, that good people might do a bad thing. Moreover, lower down the top of the page a headline criticises a Tory politician for diminishing the nurses' case: 'Fury as Rolex-wearing minister says nurses "usually" only use food banks when they've been dumped or their oven is broken'.

> **Revision activity**
>
> Look at the front pages and home pages of a range of newspapers (both print and online versions can be found online). Note examples of intertextuality and suggest reasons why they have been used. Note examples of intertextuality in the pages of your set products.

> **Xenophobia** Literally, fear of strangers or 'foreigners'. The term usually includes distrust and hatred of people from other places or communities.

A less obvious example, on the front page of the *Guardian* (3 March 2018) is a large photograph in medium close-up of a woman looking pensive and sad. She is a conventionally attractive woman who is wearing make-up, so the presence of this photograph does not disturb the patriarchal ideology that women are to be looked at, but the photograph has been shot and cropped to minimise sexual objectification. The lighting is not that used for 'glamour' photography: she is side-lit in a natural light, and there are no eye-lights to bring her eyes to life. Her image has been cropped so we only see face and scarf. Why this media language? The meaning is anchored by the use of captions such as 'Hellish limbo: Widow fights for answers'. The woman has been shot in such a way as to suggest 'widowness'. A quote, 'I dread the moment when my daughter asks, "Where's Dad?"', anchors this meaning and links this to 'motherliness'. The media language used for this tragic story does not threaten what feminists call the ideology of the family, because this is the lived experience of many of the producers and audience.

Barthes called this the 'naturalising' of ideology – the way it is encoded into media language so it seems 'normal' and 'natural'. If Barthes is right, then it should be really quite difficult to analyse ideology. If an ideology is one we take for granted, one we all don't question, then it is going to be hard to spot.

It is easier to analyse the way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies when there are two products with different viewpoints about the same event. This means that the sources chosen for the exam paper are likely to demonstrate clearly different viewpoints on the same event, perhaps where there is obvious disagreement in ideologies, in order to make their influence clearer.

For example, look at the two sources – the front pages of the *Sun* and *The Times* – for the OCR GCE Media sample assessment materials Questions 1 and 2 at: **www.ocr.org.uk/Images/316674-unit-h409-01-media-messages-sample-assessment-material.pdf**.

The two cover stories are both about the resignation of then Prime Minister David Cameron after the Brexit vote in 2016. The two newspapers had different views on Brexit and these different viewpoints are embedded in the media language:

✚ The *Sun* has chosen a close-up of David Cameron's emotional face with a headline that anchors the story as about how the Prime Minister feels: 'Why should I do the hard s**t?' This media language creates a focus on the personal pain felt by the loser in the Brexit debate.

✚ *The Times* uses a two-shot of the Prime Minister and his wife coming out of 10 Downing Street that connotes a historic as well as a personal event. This is anchored by the choice of headline: 'Brexit earthquake'. This metaphor connotes an unexpected disaster that nobody can control, a reading emphasised by a standfirst stating 'Vote to leave threatens break-up of UK'.

Now which viewpoint did each newspaper take on the Brexit debate? The media language should give you a clue. The *Sun* was passionately pro-Brexit, while *The Times* advised its readers to vote to remain in the EU.

However, though on different sides in the debate, both these front pages share a wider ideological commitment to democratic politics. Both see the resignation of a prime minister as an exceptionally newsworthy event. Both have chosen images of the Prime Minister looking emotional as symbolic of the high drama of political leadership.

On the next page there is an example of an ideology 'toolkit' you might use to analyse media language. Note that some of these ideologies also count as media contexts, especially multiculturalism, feminism, consumerism and democracy.

Ideology	How it might influence the media language used
Sexism/**patriarchy**	Emphasises sexual objectification, or an emphasis on women's appearances
	Reinforces sexist stereotypes
Feminism	Supports women's rights and gender equality
Racism	Connotes racial stereotypes or 'whiteness' as the default, with people outside of this being seen as the 'problem'.
Multiculturalism	Promotes inclusivity and multicultural viewpoints
Ethnocentrism/ xenophobia	Connotes distrust or hatred of people from other countries or communities (e.g. headlines connoting immigration as a problem or antipathy to foreigners)
Internationalism	Connotes care for and responsibilities towards other countries and peoples
Consumerism	Markets consumerist views to its audience (e.g. lifestyle advice, skylines/skyboxes, connotations of glamour or entertainment, extensive use of colour)
Individualism	Emphasises the individual (e.g. close-up photographs of people, headlines about prominent individuals) over the group or the society
Democracy	Emphasises the importance of politicians and political issues (e.g. prominent photographs of politicians looking like leaders – or not looking like leaders, if the article is critical of the politician)

Revision activity

See if you can add other ideologies you come across in your analyses to this list.

Patriarchy The system and ideology of male power. Literally it means 'rule of the father'. Patriarchal ideology includes the male gaze, stereotypes of male power (including violence) and activity, and female submissiveness and passivity, the ideology of romance and the family, and the separation of a masculine public realm from a feminine domestic realm.

Ethnocentrism Belief that your own culture is natural and normal, and that other cultures are inferior and 'strange'.

Consumerism The ideology that we should judge ourselves and others on our material possessions, that our lifestyles (e.g. our clothes, houses, cars, media use) should define our individual identities. The opposite is ideas of duty or religious rejection of material goods.

Individualism The ideology that assumes people are essentially individuals. Taking exams is an example of competitive individualism. The opposite is collectivism – that people are essentially collective, i.e. members of a group.

The table that follows outlines the political position – as far as this is possible – of each national newspaper, as this may affect their media language use in some stories.

Newspaper	Political position
The Times	Right of centre, most often supports the Conservative Party but supported the Labour Party under Tony Blair
Daily Telegraph	Right wing – staunchly supports the Conservative Party
Guardian	Left of centre – usually supports the Labour Party but has supported the Liberal Democrats
Financial Times	Pro-business – usually supports the Conservative Party
Independent	Centrist – the name suggests a desire not to be politically affiliated, but the paper has endorsed the Liberal Democrats
i	Centrist – not politically affiliated
Daily Mail	Right wing – staunchly supports the Conservative Party

Exam tip

You may be asked to analyse representations in newspapers other than the two set products. In this case a general familiarity with the political position of each newspaper should suffice, though the more familiar you are with a range of newspapers the better.

Check your understanding and progress at www.hoddereducation.co.uk/myrevisionnotes

Daily Express	Right wing, usually supports the Conservative Party but has also this century endorsed both the Labour Party (under Tony Blair) and UKIP
Sun	Right of centre, most often supports the Conservative Party but supported the Labour Party under Tony Blair
Daily Mirror	Left of centre – staunchly supports the Labour Party
Daily Star	No consistent political affiliation

Revision activity

Analyse the same event depicted in different newspapers and note the various ways that viewpoints and ideologies are embedded in the media language. Try to use the choice of media language to suggest the viewpoint and ideology.

Analyse the viewpoints and ideologies expressed in the media language of your print and online set products.

Media language theories

See the Academic Theories PDF at **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/ myrevisionnotesdownloads** about the following theorists.

Using **Barthes** in analysis will usually be a case of analysing connotations and the ways these embed ideologies, as discussed on page 13.

Todorov's theory of narrative can be applied to newspaper stories insofar as any 'bad' news story acts as a **narrative disruption** of an implied equilibrium. For example, in the story from the *Mail* above – 'FURY OVER PLOT TO LET 1.5M TURKS INTO BRITAIN' – the disruption can be seen as the 'plot', implying an initial equilibrium of a Britain 'safe' from unwanted immigration. The new equilibrium, which the disruption is driving towards, is that the people will vote against remaining in the EU in order to thwart this plot and restore control over Britain's borders.

Levi-Strauss's idea of **binary oppositions** can be readily used in analysis. For example, the cases from the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* headlines discussed above:

✚ In the *Guardian* example, the set of binary oppositions are as follows, with the valued term first:

<div align="center">

family : individual

whole : separated

</div>

✚ In the *Daily Mail* Brexit example, they are:

<div align="center">

Brexiteers : Remainers

authentic : plotters

truthful : lying

the people : elites

</div>

Using **Neale** in analysis will be in relation to genre or genre conventions, especially Neale's insistence on the dynamic nature of genre as a **shared code** that changes over time with every addition to the **generic corpus** rather than being fixed, and that is often hybridised.

Narrative disruption
The event(s) that disrupt an initial equilibrium and drive a narrative towards a resolution. For example, a murder can disrupt the peace of a community, and cause investigation and solution.

Binary opposition This consists of two concepts that mean the opposite of each other, e.g. hot : cold. Levi-Strauss analysed communication in terms of these oppositions.

Shared code The idea that genres are defined by codes and conventions that come into existence in the interrelationship between media products, their producers and their audiences. A producer looks at existing products that have been successful with audiences and produces new products using the same conventions to meet the audiences' expectations, but with subtle variations to maintain interest.

Generic corpus The body of media products in a genre. Each subtly adds to, and thus changes, the genre.

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Neale's argument that genre may be communicated outside the texts themselves in an intertextual relay does not apply so much to newspapers as it did to film in his original discussion.

Using **Baudrillard** in analysis is extremely difficult, so he may be less likely to appear in an analysis question. His idea of implosion could be applied to a news story or image about a person constructing an identity ignoring traditional social differences – celebrities who transcend their backgrounds, for example. His idea of hyperreality (signs that refer to other signs and not a reality) can be applied to absolutely anything, but would particularly apply where audiences will know nothing of events except for media representations of them and also to events about other media events (e.g. news stories about promotional activities such as film premieres).

Implosion The collapse of traditional social distinctions in postmodern society (see Baudrillard in the Academic Theories PDF at: **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/ myrevisionnotesdownloads**).

Hyperreality A sense of reality constructed by media products that refer to other media products in a never-ending chain (see Baudrillard in the Academic Theories PDF at: **www.hoddereducation.co.uk/myrevisionnotesdownloads**).

Media language and media contexts

Some media contexts may influence the use of media language in newspapers, though this impact is more oblique than the effect on representations.

Consumerism can count as a social, cultural, economic and even political context, as it affects all these areas of society. It influences media language particularly through the dominance of marketing in contemporary media. Comparing today's print newspapers with their 1950s counterparts shows that audiences are now used to colour, extensive use of photography and self-promotion in a way that would have appeared gaudy in the black-and-white world of 1950s newspapers. The cornucopia of content in online editions and the targeting of audiences through bite-sized social media feeds further suggests that consumer needs are paramount in the current media age as compared to the austere authority of traditional newspapers.

Celebrity culture – a social, cultural and even political context – infuses the media language of many newspapers with large images of celebrities dominating the layout of front pages, home pages and social media feeds.

Multiculturalism – a social and cultural and political context – affects the use of language in newspapers, where editors aim to use inclusive language and avoid racist terms.

Revision activity

Return to the media language revision activities on pages 16, 18 and 21 and see if you can insert an appropriate reference to Barthes, Todorov, Levi-Strauss, Neale or Baudrillard. Note where the theories don't help you very much – this is relevant to Question 4.

The impact of **feminism** – a social, cultural and political context – may be reflected in language use – avoiding sexist terms and stereotyping – and photographic practices. The persistence of patriarchy may express itself in sexist language and sexually objectifying photographic practices.

Postmodernism – a social and cultural context – may have led to increasing intertextuality in newspapers.

Revision activity

Revisit your analysis of the set products – the *Guardian* and the *Mail* print and online editions and use of social media – and note how media contexts have affected the media language.

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Newspapers: media representations

The subject content for representations covered here, though separated into different sections, is all highly interrelated: misrepresentation of social groups, for example, is closely linked to other sections such as those on stereotyping, the impact of contexts, and ideologies. So, in order to weave together these sections, we will use the set products – the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* – as exemplars as we explore how each section applies specifically to news, then illustrate how they might be applied to the front pages of two newspapers that you could be asked to analyse in the exam.

Representation: selection and combination

We have seen how the *repetition* of meanings created by selection and combination in media language reflects ideologies. Representation works in the same way. Our view of the world is mediated by newspapers that select which events, issues, individuals and social groups to represent, and which to ignore.

One simple way to illustrate selection is to draw a map of the world based on how many stories about each continent (or countries) are reported in British newspapers. Britain, especially London, is huge. North America, especially the USA, is large. Europe is medium sized. Australasia and Oceania, Africa and Asia are tiny. South America is usually non-existent.

These biases in representation are caused by the application of **news values**, which include bias towards powerful people, celebrities and entertainment, events or issues already in the news and seen as relevant to the audience, 'big' news, 'bad' news, 'good' news, and the unexpected, as in the old journalistic saying 'dog bites man is not news, man bites dog is'. Different newspapers will also have their own agendas. Online versions of newspapers will be more likely to have a bias towards what plays well on social media and news feeds, such as entertaining stories that are 'shareable', or stories with strong visual or audio-visual images.

Newspapers combine representations to create a view of the world. In newspapers with a strong ethos, such as the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*, a fairly consistent world-view will be represented. In the case of these two newspapers, these will often (but not always) be diametrically opposed.

The *Guardian* world-view

The *Guardian* supports liberal, progressive values.

Katharine Viner, *Guardian* editor-in-chief, wrote in 2017:

> Our moral conviction, as … codified by Scott, rests on a faith that people long to understand the world they're in, and to create a better one. We believe in the value of the public sphere; that there is such a thing as the public interest, and the common good; that we are all of equal worth; that the world should be free and fair.

She added:

> … the Guardian will embrace as wide a range of progressive perspectives as possible. We will support policies and ideas, but we will not give uncritical backing to parties or individuals. We will also engage with and publish voices from the right. In an age of tumultuous change, nobody has a monopoly on good ideas. But our guiding focus, especially in countries such as Britain, the US and Australia, will be to challenge the economic assumptions of the past three decades, which have extended market values such as competition and self-interest far beyond their natural sphere and seized the public realm.

Katharine Viner, 'A mission for journalism in a time of crisis', *Guardian,* 16 November 2017

> **News values** The values that govern which events are selected as news and which are rejected.

> **Exam tip**
>
> Both presence and absence are important in representation analysis, but analysing what is present in a representation is much easier than analysing what is absent. Listing which groups are not included in a representation does not count as effective analysis. Comparing two sources might show, however, that a representation is absent in one source and present in another – you should explain why this is, trying to link to the viewpoints and ideologies of the different sources.

The *Daily Mail* world-view

The *Mail* supports a free market economy, and British traditions such as the royal family, the church, the army and democracy.

In 2013, then *Daily Mail* editor Paul Dacre argued that the *Mail* stands up for its readers, 'with their dreams (mostly unfulfilled) of a decent education and health service they can trust, their belief in the family, patriotism, self-reliance, and their over-riding suspicion of the state and the People Who Know Best'. They are sceptical 'over the European Union and a human rights court that seems to care more about the criminal than the victim … [and] while tolerant, fret that the country's schools and hospitals can't cope with mass immigration'. He adds:

> I am proud that our Dignity For The Elderly Campaign has for years stood up for Britain's most neglected community. Proud that we have fought for justice for Stephen Lawrence, Gary McKinnon and the relatives of the victims of the Omagh bombing, for those who have seen loved ones suffer because of MRSA and the Liverpool Care Pathway. I am proud that we have led great popular campaigns for the NSPCC and Alzheimer's Society, on the dangers of paedophilia and the agonies of dementia. And I'm proud of our war against round-the-clock drinking, casinos, plastic bags, internet pornography and secret courts.

Paul Dacre, 'Why is the left obsessed by the *Daily Mail*?', *Guardian,* 12 October 2013

Let's analyse the following two headlines and images from the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail Online* in terms of selection and combination in the light of these different world-views.

Figure 1.2 *Daily Mail Online* Twitter post

The *Mail* tweet has chosen to combine the headline for an article on housework with an image of a woman putting on an apron. The two elements fit together within patriarchal ideology as they reinforce the representation of housework as a feminine activity. This can be seen as fitting into the *Daily Mail* world-view insofar as complaints about sexist stereotyping may be seen as interference from Paul Dacre's 'People Who Know Best'.

> **Revision activity**
>
> How do these two statements suggest different ideologies? Which is more collectivist and which more individualist? Which is more internationalist and which more nationalist?

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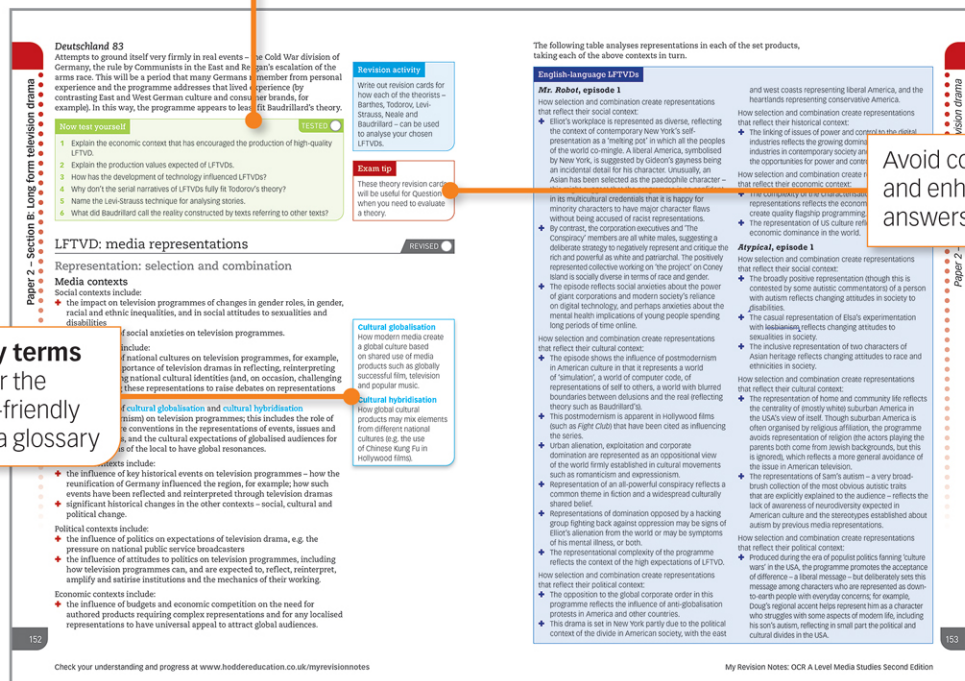
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