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Examiners' report

MEDIA STUDIES

J200
For first teaching in 2017

# J200/02 Summer 2019 series
Version 1

Contents

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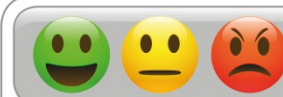
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Introduction

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. 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. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 2 series overview

This is the Music and News paper for this specification, requiring:

- knowledge and understanding of the Media Studies theoretical framework
- knowledge and understanding of the influence of media contexts on media products and processes
- the ability to analyse seen and unseen media products using the theoretical framework and media contexts
- the ability to make judgements and draw conclusions based on these analyses.

Candidates appeared to be well prepared for this paper, showing the ability to respond to the specific questions set and analyse media products. Most candidates attempted all the questions. Some candidates required additional sheets for their answers, but many very good answers achieved high marks using only the space provided on the question paper.

Candidates who did well on this paper were able to answer all the questions in the time allowed and were clear on which area of the theoretical framework their answers should focus on. They could demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the media forms as a whole as well as the set media products, and could demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how media contexts influenced historical newspapers. Successful candidates showed sophisticated analysis skills.

Candidates who did less well on this paper did not answer all the questions, wrote more descriptive responses or did not respond to the specific demands of the question set. Less able candidates might often discuss the wrong area of the theoretical framework; discussing target audience in an answer to a question on representation, for example.

Section A overview

This section comprises a mix of knowledge and understanding (AO1) and analysis (AO2) questions, including a comparative media language analysis of unseen products. The analysis questions often elicited better responses as the candidates had to analyse the specific products with which they were presented, which discourages pre-learned answers. On the other hand, there was a tendency in Q3, for example, to reproduce all the candidates knew about the set products without specific reference to representational difference.

Question 1

Section A: Music

1 Identify the word that describes a large company which owns a set of companies that produce different media forms.

.... [1]

Most of the more able candidates correctly identified 'conglomerate' as the answer, although there was wide variation in how it was spelt.

Question 2

2 Explain one way that music radio stations can meet the requirements of public service broadcasting (PSB). Use the Radio 1 Live Lounge as an example in your answer.

.... [4]

More successful answers were clear about PSB requirements and explained them in general with an illustration from the set product or stated them then developed an explanation through the illustration.

Those that used more specific requirements such as the need for diversity or originality found it relatively easy to show how the Radio 1 Live Lounge fulfilled this requirement. Those who used a more general 'inform, educate and entertain' formulation – which they were rewarded for– sometimes found this rather harder to illustrate.

Less successful answers would show little knowledge and understanding by citing requirements, such as the need to attract a target audience, that are not distinctively PSB but apply to a range of media products.

Question 3

3 Explain how music videos use representations to create difference. Refer to one set pair of music videos you have studied that use different representations to support your answer. The set pairs of music videos are:

Pair 1:	Wheatus – Teenage Dirtbag	Avril Lavigne – Sk8er Boi
Pair 2:	Mark Ronson, Bruno Mars – Uptown Funk	Beyoncé – If I Were A Boy
Pair 3:	The Vamps, Demi Lovato – Somebody To You	Little Mix – Black Magic
Pair 4:	Tinie Tempah, Jess Glynne – Not Letting Go	Paloma Faith – Picking Up The Pieces

[10]

This question was generally answered well as the candidates were familiar with the set products. More successful answers focused on difference – either by contrasting the two set products or by establishing how they created difference from conventional representations in music videos. Better answers would use the set products to discuss the media form as a whole. Less successful answers focused on media language rather than representation and/or did not discuss difference.

Question 4

4   Refer to **Extract 1** in the insert. Analyse the use of stereotypes in the representations in **Extract 1**, the front cover of *MOJO* magazine.

....

.... **[5]**

This was an accessible question despite the unseen extract and most candidates seemed comfortable with the concept of stereotypes. More successful answers noticed that the word 'stereotypes' was plural and offered two or more stereotypes in their answer – these might be two stereotypes of the same social group or stereotypes of two groups. Less successful answers confused stereotypes with the house style of MOJO magazine or the conventions of magazines as a whole, wrote about target audience, or simply described the extract, often with emphasis on its 'dark colours'. There was some discussion of the significance of the artist being overlaid by the masthead, which seldom successfully established stereotyping.

Question 5

5*   Refer to **Extracts 1** and **2** in the **insert**.

How far do **Extracts 1** and **2** differ in their use of media language because they are covering different types of music?

In your answer you should:
- analyse the media language in **Extracts 1** and **2**, which are from *MOJO* and *BBC Music* magazines
- make judgements and draw conclusions about how far the media language is used differently in both extracts to fit different types of music.   **[15]**
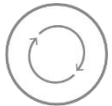
Although this appeared at first sight to be a demanding question, candidates were on the whole successful. They were familiar with the use of media language in *MOJO* magazine to reflect its 'classic rock' content and could readily contrast the more formal style of *BBC Music* magazine, albeit with some rather ageist and derogatory comments about classical music and John Eliot Gardiner. Candidates did not require understanding of musical genres outside those covered by *MOJO* magazine to score highly in this question, so, for example, the fact that some candidates thought that Gardiner was in fact Monteverdi was not penalised.

Successful answers cited the differences in layout, typography, colour, photography and use of language and made considered judgements, including the judgement that the two covers had more in common as music magazines than what divided them.

Less successful answers confused serif and sans-serif fonts, relied on accurate but simple points about what the cover artists were wearing, or simply described the front covers.

Section B overview

This section comprises a mix of knowledge and understanding (AO1) and analysis (AO2) questions, including analysis of an unseen extract from *The Observer* newspaper and Q10 on the influence of media contexts on historical print editions of *The Observer*. It was clear that many candidates did not have the same level of knowledge and understanding of print and online, social and participatory newspapers as media forms as they had for television, for example, in Paper 1. Many less able candidates referred to *The Observer* as a magazine and were unaware of the generic conventions of the popular and quality press.

	AfL	It appears that candidates require more familiarisation with newspapers as a media form, not just the set product.

Question 6

Section B: News

6   Identify the word that describes the way newspapers increasingly operate on a world-wide scale.

.... **[1]**

A large number of candidates did not answer this question correctly, despite 'globalised audiences' being one of the key ideas listed in the specification under media industries for Component 2. Successful answers tended to offer 'globalisation' or 'globalised'.

Question 7

7   Explain one of the uses and gratifications of online news using Blumler and Katz's theory. Use the online version of *The Observer* as an example in your answer.

....

.... **[4]**

Most candidates could cite one of the 'uses and gratifications', although fewer explained what it meant, and even fewer could illustrate this with detailed examples from *The Observer* online, with some less successful answers choosing to refer to the print newspaper extract in the insert. Many effective responses explained uses and gratifications such as social interaction or surveillance and gave examples such as the comments under opinion articles or live news feeds.

Question 8

8   Refer to **Extract 3** in the insert.

Analyse the representations of social groups in **Extract 3**, the front page of *The Observer*. Give **two** examples from the extract.

....

.... **[5]**

This was a very accessible question for those candidates who understood the key representational idea of 'social groups'. Successful answers analysed the positive representation of Black Britons, an often under-represented and stereotyped social group, the positive representation of women as activists, and the stereotypical representation of women as cooks. Less successful responses tried to discuss 'banks' as social groups, discussed the social groups that might make up the newspaper's audience, or simply described the page.

Question 9

9*   In this question you will be rewarded for drawing together elements from your full course of study, including different areas of the theoretical framework and media contexts.

How far does the media language in **Extract 3**, the front page of *The Observer*, reflect genre conventions?

In your answer you should:
- analyse the media language in **Extract 3**, giving examples from the extract
- make judgements and draw conclusions about how far the media language reflects generic conventions or other areas of the theoretical framework and media contexts.   **[15]**

This was an accessible question for those candidates who understood newspaper genre conventions and could analyse how the media language of the front cover from *The Observer* reflected and inflected the conventions of 'broadsheet' newspapers (any valid description of the genre was allowed, e.g. the 'quality press'). Successful answers made judgements and drew conclusions about the influence of these conventions and then weighed up the relative importance of the newspaper's target audience or liberal values, for example, in its media language. These enabled the stipulation to draw together elements from the full course of study to be met.

Some answers did focus on media language and conventions but were weak on typography: either discussing the use of serif or sans-serif fonts without specifying which were used in which parts of the front page or being more specific but inaccurate.

Less successful answers were unclear about genre in newspapers, discussed as conventions aspects of *The Observer* that are not shared by other 'broadsheet' newspapers, reproduced stock answers about *The Observer* as a newspaper – its audience, its values, its ownership, and so on, or simply described the extract. Many of these answers did not focus on media language at all.

Very weak answers were unsure that *The Observer* is a newspaper, referring to it as a 'magazine'.

	Misconception	The presence of headlines or a masthead, for example, do not count as generic conventions, nor does a liberal or left-wing standpoint.
?		

Exemplar 1

There are aspects of this page that do not ~~form~~ reflect genre conventions of a broadsheet paper. The typeface includes a sans-serif heading, the masthead itself being bold and plain, reflecting the paper's progressive, modern attitudes, and blue and orange headings straying from classic conventions of black and white broadsheets and adding to modernism and creating interest. ~~There's also~~ There's also unconventional use of layout, as there's considerably less content than a typical hard-news paper, used to simplify it and create a sleek, organised appearance. There's also a skybox including ~~odd~~ an images of food to intrigue certain readers and references to possible sponsored content, a bright, starry box reading 'Special Edition'. This is all suggests informality and a slight stray to more conventions of a typical tabloid.

However there's also aspects that do conform to genre conventions, like the serifed font of the article content that is typically used by broadsheets due to better legibility and formality, suggesting inclusion of hard news and a some remaining traditional aspects. ~~The~~ The formality suggested by serifed font indicates that the paper is sticking to its sophisticated, affluent audience.

Also, the organised layout with little overlapping denotes the classic tabloid's chaotic appearance, and indicates organisation that comes from a focus on content and quality over the sensationalist no thirst for readership of a tabloid. Then

This all suggests that overall the Observer mostly sticks to classic broadsheet conventions, with occasional straying to comply with progressing styles of media and modern readers' interests.

This is an example of a response that gained full marks for Q9 by providing sophisticated, perceptive and accurate analysis of the media language in the unseen extract from *The Observer* newspaper combined with clear judgements and a conclusion backed by this analysis. This shows the importance of answering the question set.

The references to audience are sufficient to make sure that more than one area of the theoretical framework is included, thus enabling the answer to gain more than 8 marks for AO2. These references are within the context of an analysis of media language and genre conventions – i.e. the candidate has not 'thrown the kitchen sink' at the question but has carefully answered the question.

Note that there are occasional errors in this answer, yet it gains full marks – the top of the mark range is used for answers that are as good as we might expect at this level, not for perfect answers.

Question 10

10 Explain how social and cultural contexts influenced newspapers in the 1960s. Refer to stories from the front pages of the set newspapers you have studied to support your answer.

....

.... **[10]**

This proved an accessible question. More successful answers discussed two or more contexts and gave specific details about stories in the historical set products – often accurately quoting headlines – that illustrated the influence of these contexts. The most popular contexts included: the Cold War, lack of multiculturalism and (changes in) patriarchy. Less successful answers often still mentioned contexts, albeit briefly and more crudely, but typically lacked exemplification. Few answers did not refer to the set products or chose the wrong front pages.

'Social and cultural contexts' was taken as one concept in the mark scheme – answers did not need to separately cover social and cultural contexts.

	Misconception	Advertisements do not count as 'stories' on front pages. They will reflect contexts, but did not count as exemplification using stories, which is what this particular question asked for.
?		

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