



ASSESSMENT and  
QUALIFICATIONS  
ALLIANCE

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# Mark scheme January 2004

## GCE

# Media Studies

## Unit MED6

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**A2 MEDIA STUDIES****COMPARATIVE CRITICAL ANALYSIS (MED6)****MARK SCHEME – JANUARY 2004****Introduction:**

In this synoptic unit candidates must demonstrate their understanding of the connections between the different elements of the specification. In order to do this candidates will be expected to produce evidence of their attainment of the broad objectives of the specification – critical autonomy and media literacy – through the comparative analysis of texts. They will be required to analyse, explain and account for the similarities and differences between media texts. To do this satisfactorily candidates will need to:

- (i) demonstrate their critical reading abilities using the Key Concepts
- (ii) draw upon their knowledge of major ideas, theories, debates and information
- (iii) use their knowledge of a range of relevant contextual factors.

The aim of this unit, is to provide candidates with the opportunity to draw together, and make connections between, the different elements of their course of study. This will be necessary in order to achieve the required depth of analysis demanded by this module, and in order to explain and account for the similarities and differences between media texts.

This unit is assessed through the following Assessment Objectives:

**A01** demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts

**A02** demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies

**A03i** demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media

**A03ii** demonstrate the ability to analyse critically and comparatively a range of texts to determine and account for their similarities and differences

The weighting for these assessment objectives is as follows:

A01	5%
A02	2½%
A03i	2½%
A03ii	5%%

These weightings are reflected in this mark scheme and should be borne in mind when marking candidates' scripts.

The categories which follow are those which candidates are asked to consider on the examination paper.

### **MEDIA LANGUAGE**

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### **GENRE**

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### **NARRATIVE**

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### **REPRESENTATION/IDEOLOGY**

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### **AUDIENCE/INSTITUTION**

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### **RELEVANT CONTEXTS**

These might include:

- the **institutional** context of production of the two magazines. Each targets a very different audience despite seeming to occupy the same subject space. This difference in audience is a key factor for the differential in approach and this impacts significantly on their very different production values, media language, generic conventions, ideologies and audience expectations
- audience responses to each magazine – and how they differ. This might also include awareness of niche marketing and how the same material can be recycled to different audiences
- the **representations** employed in each magazine
- contrasts in ideology between the two texts relating to form and function
- exploitation of genre expectations
- the expectations that the texts establish about the audience in detail
- the **ideological position** signified by each magazine. Each magazine locates its ideological position explicitly
- social agenda defined by each text
- form and function in relation to each text

## RELEVANT IDEAS, THEORIES, DEBATES AND INFORMATION

Candidates might be expected to draw upon their wider knowledge of:

<b>Segmentation</b>	e.g. debates regarding how audiences are created by magazines and the importance of brand identification; interpellation; audience interpretations; establishment of form and content; and audience distinctions between a variety of products
<b>Discourse &amp; address</b>	e.g. typical conventions and their similarities and differences across these magazines; use of images; use of headlines; production values; institutional codes; audience expectations and targeting; distribution and marketing; synergy with other texts and products; use of promotional devices
<b>Narrative</b>	vocabulary and establishment of tone and level of discourse; different methods of constructing narrative; implicit values; enigma codes etc.; different approaches to narrative in the different mediums; levels of cultural competence
<b>Institution</b>	codes and conventions for such seemingly diverse publications and the way each institution creates a very clear identity for the product to ensure audience loyalty; contrast between the different audiences and the similarities between the texts and materials; creation and exploitation of target markets; each text as exemplification of its institution and position

## ELABORATING AND ACCOUNTING FOR SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

The **elaboration** of similarities and differences should inform candidates' discussions of most of the previous categories. Points of **similarity** are initially obvious but there are further similarities in the material being discussed and in the use of the 'magazine conventions' in the different magazines. **Differences** are likely to centre upon the obvious differences in audience and hence in form and medium. **BBC Wildlife** has established a clear position within the genre of magazines, defining and exploiting its own particular position as a magazine, authoritative text and linkage to television programmes. The codes and conventions being employed both draw on and move away from those used by hobby magazines as the magazine seeks to exploit this position and ensure appropriate gravitas, for example as exemplified in the discourse and the layout of the front page. The discourse and representations used in **Animals and You** are very different, to reach a significantly different audience and the promotional methods, establishment of niche market and tone of the text are significantly different. **Animals and You** must maintain market share and niche market in a congested and competitive marketplace and must market itself far more aggressively to maintain this audience share. The magazine is more dependant on form than content whereas the **BBC Wildlife** magazine seeks to establish a market position based far more on content. The audience for both texts is significantly different and demonstrate the ultimate control and increased audience spending achievable when texts are this closely targeted and carefully constructed.

Any **accounting** for similarities and differences should be fully rewarded – answers which move beyond simplistic differentiation of the audience should be rewarded more highly, as should those which are aware of the complex and competitive marketplace in which these magazines must establish brand loyalty and USP. Relevant areas here are issues of purpose; layout; production values; representations employed and ideologies established; the appeal to a similar audience; mode of address and how this relates to form and function; generic conventions; wider context and social expectations embedded in the two texts (representational and ideological features of each one); audience responses to the texts and the responsibilities of the media in shaping and forming those responses; and the cultural knowledge embedded within and defined by these texts and their discourse and communication. Both magazines are dependant on audience identification with the product although arguably, **BBC Wildlife** seeks to establish a seemingly more academic position.

It is unlikely that the audience for each text would find the other text appealing, however, the advantage of such powerful niche marketing for children to ensure continued magazine purchase as adults may be a key economic and social factor in the heavy presence of these magazines in the market place.

*Scripts must be marked in conjunction with the grade descriptors.*

*Valid points not listed above must be credited.*

## **General Marking Criteria**

### **Level 6 51 – 60 marks**

At this level, there is evidence of a very good synoptic ability (drawing together concepts, arguments, ideas, theories and information from different parts of the specification) in making effective comparisons based on a comprehensive understanding and application of all relevant Key Concepts. Candidates will show a sophisticated identification of the similarities and differences between the two texts showing a very clear understanding of the form and function of the different materials. Candidates will make good use of their learning at AS and A2 levels in responding to the texts, with sophisticated knowledge and application of the wider contexts relevant to the materials. There will also be very good evidence of critical autonomy - the ability to make individual judgements informed by relevant ideas, theories and information. Overall, at this level, there should be a well structured and engaged debate, supported by confident and detailed reference to the texts with a fluent and mature writing style.

### **Level 5 41 – 50 marks**

At this level the candidate is able to make some comparison across the full range of material offered and there will be evidence of a good synoptic ability (drawing together concepts, arguments, ideas, theories and information from different parts of the specification) in making effective comparisons. There will be good identification of similarities and differences between the two texts and a clear understanding of the form and function of the different materials offered. This will be supported by good understanding and application of relevant Key Concepts, using these Key Concepts to directly underpin the evaluation. There will be evidence of good knowledge and application of the wider contexts relevant to the materials and a good sense of critical autonomy – the ability to make individual judgements informed by relevant ideas, theories and information. The answer makes detailed reference to the texts to support the debate and engages well with the materials with clear and reasonably fluent expression.

### **Level 4 31 – 40 marks**

At this level there will be some evidence of synoptic ability (drawing together concepts, arguments, ideas, theories and information from different parts of the specification) in making effective comparisons, although these may not be fully developed. There will be a sound identification of similarities and differences between the two texts and a sound understanding of the relationship between the different texts. There will be some evidence of understanding and application of most relevant Key Concepts and the evaluation will make use of these Key Concepts. There will be some knowledge and application of the wider contexts relevant to the texts and a reasonable sense of critical autonomy – candidates will probably offer some valid opinions, which may be individual but are equally valid if justified. The analysis is likely to be methodical in approach to analysis but may lack a critical edge. There will be a sense of detailed comparison although candidates may concentrate on some parts of the texts to the exclusion of others. The candidate will have a clear written style in which technical errors do not obscure meaning.

### **Level 3 21 – 30 marks**

At level 3 there will be some limited evidence of synoptic ability when making comparisons. This may be sketchy and limited but is present. There will be some identification of similarities and differences between the two texts. The answer will show some understanding of the different materials and understanding of the relationship between them. There will be evidence of understanding and application of some relevant Key Concepts, though these may sometimes be implicit. There should be some evaluation which makes reference to the Key Concepts. A knowledge and application of wider contexts may be implicit although not explored in any depth. Textual references may be descriptive or insufficiently detailed. Some sound arguments will be presented though they may not be sustained and there may be some irrelevance. Straightforward ideas will be expressed clearly, if not fluently. There may be errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these will not obscure meaning.

**Level 2 11 – 20 marks**

There is unlikely to be evidence of synoptic ability in making comparisons, which may be confined to descriptive and simplistic points. The candidate is able to identify the basis for comparison of the two texts to some degree. There will be little evidence of synoptic ability in accounting for similarities and differences, however, there will be a basic understanding of some Key Concepts. References to texts will lack detail. Some comment will be offered – more than just narrative and description; and there should be some discussion of ideas, but this will be simplistic. The written style will be generally clear though technical errors and faulty syntax may sometimes obscure meaning.

**Level 1 0 – 10 marks**

Although there may be some points of analysis to credit here, the overall standard of the answer will fall below the threshold to move into Level 2. Such answers may be primarily descriptive or may fail to engage with the materials clearly or give little sense of identification of similarities and differences between the materials.

## Assessment Grid

Level	A01	A02	A03i	A03ii
	<i>Demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media</i>	<i>Demonstrate the ability to analyse critically and comparatively a range of texts to determine and account for their similarities and differences</i>
<b>6</b> 51-60 marks	<p>Sophisticated understanding of the media language used in these texts.</p> <p>Detailed analysis of the texts with good illustration and exemplification.</p> <p>Confident conceptual exploration.</p> <p>Competent use of appropriate terminology.</p> <p>Confident and evident understanding of Key Concepts.</p>	<p>Very good synoptic ability, drawing on a wide range of contextual references.</p> <p>Evident ability to draw out form and function of each text within its medium.</p> <p>Clear awareness of institutional issues relating to these texts.</p> <p>Evident awareness of mode of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis.</p> <p>Evident awareness of the complex nature of magazine marketing in our culture and society.</p>	<p>Consistent ability to analyse text in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media.</p> <p>Evident understanding of these texts as promotional and niche market texts.</p>	<p>Sophisticated identification of similarities and differences between the two texts.</p> <p>Confident critical voice and clear evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with the texts in response.</p> <p>Evident ability to identify the target audience for the texts and evaluate them in relation to audience, form and function.</p> <p>Balanced analysis with wide ranging focus on all stimulus materials.</p>
<b>5</b> 41-50 marks	<p>Good understanding of the media language used in these texts.</p> <p>Reasonably detailed analysis of the texts with good illustration and exemplification.</p> <p>Appropriate conceptual exploration.</p> <p>Competent use of appropriate terminology. Confident and evident understanding of Key Concepts.</p>	<p>Good synoptic ability, drawing on a reasonably wide range of contextual references. Clear ability to draw out form and function of each text within its medium.</p> <p>Good awareness of institutional issues relating to these texts. Awareness of mode of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis.</p> <p>Good awareness of the complex nature of magazine marketing in our culture and society.</p>	<p>Consistent ability to analyse the text in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media.</p> <p>Understanding of these texts as promotional and niche market texts.</p>	<p>Good identification of similarities and differences between the two texts.</p> <p>Identifiable critical voice and evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with the texts in response.</p> <p>Clear ability to identify the target audience for texts and evaluate the text in relation to audience, form and function.</p> <p>Balanced analysis with focus on all stimulus materials.</p>



<b>Level</b>	<b>A01</b>	<b>A02</b>	<b>A03i</b>	<b>A03ii</b>
	<i>Demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media</i>	<i>Demonstrate the ability to analyse critically and comparatively a range of texts to determine and account for their similarities and differences</i>
<b>4</b> 31-40 marks	Secure understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Reasonably detailed analysis of the texts with appropriate examples and use of detail. Conceptual exploration undertaken. Reasonable use of appropriate terminology. Appropriate use and understanding of Key Concepts.	Secure synoptic ability, drawing on contextual references. Ability to draw out form and function of each text within its medium. Secure awareness of institutional issues relating to these texts. Reasonable awareness of mode of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis. Secure awareness of the complex nature of magazine marketing in our culture and society.	Analysis of the texts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media. Awareness of these texts as promotional and niche market texts.	Appropriate identification of similarities and differences between the two texts. Emerging critical voice and clear evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with texts in response. Sound ability to identify the target audience for the texts and evaluate them in relation to audience, form and function. Some analysis with reference to all stimulus materials.
<b>3</b> 21-30 marks	Some understanding of the media language used in these texts. Basic analysis of the texts with limited use of illustration and examples. Simplistic conceptual exploration but evidence of conceptual understanding. Basic use of appropriate terminology. Some understanding of Key Concepts.	Some synoptic ability, drawing on some contextual reference. Attempts to draw out form and function of each text within its medium. Some awareness of institutional issues relating to these texts. Some awareness of mode of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis. Some awareness of the complex nature of magazine marketing in our culture and society.	Attempts to analyse the texts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media. Some awareness of these texts as promotional and niche market texts.	Basic identification of similarities and differences between the two texts. Basic evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with texts in response. Basic ability to identify the target audience(s) for the texts and evaluate them in relation to audience, form and function.

Level	A01	A02	A03i	A03ii
	<i>Demonstrate knowledge and application of the Key Concepts employed within Media Studies and the evaluation of texts and ideas using the Key Concepts</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge and application of the wider contexts (historical, social, political, economic) relevant to Media Studies</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge, application and evaluation of major ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media</i>	<i>Demonstrate the ability to analyse critically and comparatively a range of texts to determine and account for their similarities and differences</i>
<b>2</b> 11-20 marks	Limited understanding of the media language used in these texts. Limited analysis of the texts with few illustrations or examples – tendency to description evident. Limited conceptual exploration or developed argument. Limited use of appropriate terminology. Simplistic or unclear understanding of Key Concepts.	Weak synoptic ability, drawing on little contextual reference. Largely unable to draw out form and function of each text within its medium. Limited awareness of institutional issues relating to these texts. Implicit basic awareness of mode of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis, although this may not be explored directly. Limited awareness of the complex nature of magazine marketing in our culture and society.	Limited ability to analyse the texts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media. Limited understanding of these texts as promotional and niche market texts.	Limited identification of similarities and differences between the two texts. Limited attempt at critical autonomy and engagement with the texts in response. Identifies the target audience for the texts. Answer may be uneven with a greater focus on one of the two texts.
<b>1</b> 0-10 marks	Little relevant understanding of the media language used in these texts. Describes texts without analysis. Little use of appropriate terminology and response falls below A2 expectations for understanding of Key Concepts.	The answer does not move beyond the texts provided. No sense of institutional context for these texts. Very little awareness of mode of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis. Very little awareness of the complex nature of magazine marketing in our culture and society. May not address issues of magazine production at all.	Little or no evidence of analysis in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of contemporary media.	Little if any identification of similarities and differences between the two texts. Some material relating to target audience for texts. Little, if any, sense of critical autonomy or critical voice.