Key words for examinations.
GCSE Media

Glossary

ACTION CODE	Something that happens in the narrative that tells the audience that some action will follow, for example in a scene from a soap opera, a couple are intimate in a bedroom and the camera shows the audience the husband's car pulling up at the front of the house.
ACTIVE AUDIENCE	Audiences who actively engage in selecting media products to consume and interpret their meanings.
ANCHORAGE	The words that accompany an image (still or moving) give the meaning associated with that image. If the caption or voiceover is changed, then so may be the way in which the audience interprets the image. An image with an anchor is a closed text; the audience are given a preferred reading. A text without an anchor is an open text as the audience can interpret it as they wish. The same image of a school in a local newspaper could have a negative or a positive headline, which may change the way in which the same image is viewed by the reader.
APPEAL	The way in which products attract and interest an audience e.g. through the use of stars, familiar genre conventions etc.
ASPIRATIONAL	In terms of a media text one that encourages the audience to want more money, up market consumer items and a higher social position.
ATTRACT	How media producers appeal to audiences to encourage them to consume the product.
AUDIENCE CATEGORISATION	How media producers group audiences (e.g. by age, gender, ethnicity) to target their products.
AUDIENCE CONSUMPTION	The way in which audiences engage with media products (e.g. viewing a TV programme, playing a video game, reading a blog or magazine). Methods of consumption have changed significantly due to the development of digital technologies.
AUDIENCE INTERPRETATION	The way in which audiences 'read' the meanings in, and make sense of, media products.
AUDIENCE RESPONSE	How audiences react to media products e.g. by accepting the intended meanings (preferred reading).
BRAND IDENTITY	The association the audience make with the brand, for example *Chanel* or *Nike*, built up over time and reinforced by the advertising campaigns and their placement.
BROADSHEET	A larger newspaper that publishes more serious news, for example *The Daily Telegraph* has maintained its broadsheet format.
CAPTION	Words that accompany an image that explain its meaning.

CHANNEL IDENTITY	The aspects which make the channel recognisable to audiences and different from any other channel. Presenters, stars, programme genres and specific programmes all contribute to a channel's identity.
CIRCULATION	The dissemination of media products - the method will depend on the media form, e.g. circulation of print magazines, broadcast of television programmes etc.
COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE	This is conversational language where the words used are different from and less formal than those in written speech.
COMMERCIAL CHANNELS	These are channels like ITV and Channel 4 that raise their money through advertising, unlike the BBC which currently gets its money from the licence fee.
CONNOTATION	The suggested meanings attached to a sign, e.g., the red car in the advert suggests speed and power.
CONVENTIONS	What the audience expects to see in a particular media text, for example the conventions of science fiction films may include: aliens, scientists, other worlds, gadgets, representations of good and evil. Useful headings to discuss conventions are: characters, setting, iconography, narrative, technical codes and representation.
CONVERGENCE	The coming together of previously separate media industries and/or platforms; often the result of advances in technology whereby one device or platform contains a range of different features. The mobile phone, for example, allows the user to download and listen to music, view videos, tweet artists etc. All this can be done through one portable device.
COVER LINES	These suggest the content to the reader and often contain teasers and rhetorical questions. These relate to the genre of the magazine.
CROSS-PLATFORM MARKETING	In media terms, a text that is distributed and exhibited across a range of media formats or platforms. This may include film, television, print, radio and the Internet.
DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY	A group in which consumers are placed according to their age, sex, income, profession, etc. The categories range from A to E where categories A and B are the wealthiest and most influential members of society.
DENOTATION	The description of what you can see/hear in a media text, e.g. the car in the advert is red.
DIEGETIC SOUND	Sound that comes from the fictional world and can be seen, for example the sound of a gun firing, the cereal being poured into the bowl in an advert, etc.
DISRUPTION	This is what changes the balance in the story world; it may be a character or an event, for example a murder.
DISTRIBUTION	The methods by which media products are delivered to audiences, including the marketing campaign. These methods

	will depend upon the product (for example, distribution companies in the film industry organise the release of the films).
DIVERSIFICATION	Where media organisations who have specialised in producing media products in one form move into producing content across a range of forms.
ENCODING AND DECODING	Media producers encode messages and meanings in products that are decoded, or interpreted, by audiences.
ENIGMA CODE	A narrative device which increases tension and audience interest by only releasing bits of information, for example teasers in a film trailer. Narrative strands that are set up at the beginning of a drama/film that makes the audience ask questions; part of a restricted narrative.
EQUILIBRIUM	In relation to narrative, a state of balance or stability (in Todorov's theory the equilibrium is disrupted and restored).
FAN	An enthusiast or aficionado of a particular media form or product.
FEATURE	In magazine terms, the main, or one of the main, stories in an edition. Features are generally located in the middle of the magazine, and cover more than one or two pages.
FOUR Cs	This stands for Cross Cultural Consumer Characteristics and was a way of categorising consumers into groups through their motivational needs. The main groups were Mainstreamers, Aspirers, Explorers, Succeeders and Reformers.
FRANCHISE	An entire series of, for example, a film including the original film and all those that follow.
GATEKEEPERS	The people responsible for deciding the most appropriate stories to appear in newspapers. They may be the owner, editor or senior journalists. They will only let the stories most appropriate for the ideology of the paper 'through the gate'.
GENRE	Media texts can be grouped into genres that all share similar conventions. Science fiction is a genre, as are teenage magazines, etc.
GLOBAL	Worldwide - e.g. a media product with global reach is a product that is distributed around the world.
HOUSE STYLE	What makes the magazine recognisable to its readers every issue. The house style is established through the choice of colour, the layout and design, the font style, the content and the general 'look' of the publication.
HYBRID GENRE	Media texts that incorporate elements of more than one genre and are therefore more difficult to classify. *Dr Who*, for example, is a science fiction/fantasy television drama.

ICONOGRAPHY	The props, costumes, objects and backgrounds associated with a particular genre; for example, in a police series you would expect to see, uniforms, blue flashing lights, scene of crime tape and police radios.
INDEPENDENT FILM	A film made outside of the financial and artistic control of a large film company. A truly independent film should be privately conceived and funded. However, few films made are really 'independent'. This more commonly refers to a film that is made by a smaller film company on a low budget.
INDEPENDENT RECORD LABEL	A record label that operates without the funding of and not necessarily linked to a major record label.
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	A legal concept which refers to creations of the mind for which the owner's rights are recognised. These rights cover such intangible assets such as music, literary and artistic works; discoveries and inventions; words, phrases, symbols, and designs.
INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE	The ways in which audiences can become actively involved with a product, for example by posting a response to a blog or live tweeting during a television programme.
INTERTEXTUAL	Where one media text makes reference to aspects of another text within it. For example, referencing a scene from a film in a television advertisement. Audiences enjoy recognising intertextual references.
INTERTEXTUALITY	Where one media product references another text, for example a music video recreating visual codes that have been used in a film.
LAYOUT AND DESIGN	The way in which a page has been designed to attract the target audience. This includes the font styles used, the positioning of text and images and the use of colour.
LINEAR NARRATIVE	Where the narrative unfolds in chronological order from beginning to end.
MAINSTREAM	These are media products that are the most popular at the time and tend to be the most conventional.
MARKETING	This is the way in which an organisation tells its audience about a product. It will use different ways in order to do this, for example a film company will produce trailers and posters to promote a new film. It will also make sure that the stars appear on chat shows and give interviews just before the release of the film.
MASCULINITY	The perceived characteristics generally considered to define what it is to be a man. These can differ according to sociological variations and cultural changes.
MASS AUDIENCE	Traditional idea of the audience as one large, homogenous group.

MASTHEAD	This is the title and design of the title of the magazine. The name and font style may give a clue to the genre.
MEDIA CONGLOMERATE	A company that owns other companies across a range of media platforms. This increases their domination of the market and their ability to distribute and exhibit their product.
MEDIA FORMS	Types of media products, for example television, newspapers, music videos.
MEDIA LANGUAGE	The specific elements of a media product that communicate meanings to audiences, e.g. visual codes, audio codes, technical codes, language.
MEDIA PLATFORM	The range of different ways of communicating with an audience, for example newspapers, the Internet, and television.
MEDIATION	The way in which a media text is constructed in order to represent the producer of the text's version of reality; constructed through selection, organisation and focus.
MISE-EN-SCENE	In analysis of moving image products, how the combination of images in the frame creates meaning; how individual shots in a film or photograph have been composed.
MISREPRESENTATION	Certain social groups (usually minority groups) may be represented in a way that is inappropriate and not based on reality.
MODE OF ADDRESS	The way in which a media text 'speaks to' its target audience. For example, teenage magazines have a chatty informal mode of address; the news has a more formal mode of address.
NARRATIVE	The 'story' that is told by the media text. All media texts, not just fictional texts, have a narrative. For example, magazines have a clear beginning, middle and end. Most narratives are linear and follow a specific structure (Todorov).
NEWS AGENDA	The list of stories that may appear in a particular paper. The items on the news agenda will reflect the style and ethos of the paper.
NICHE AUDIENCE	A relatively small audience with specialised interests, tastes, and backgrounds.
NON-DIEGETIC SOUND	Sound that is out of the shot, for example a voiceover or romantic mood music.
NON-LINEAR NARRATIVE	Here the narrative manipulates time and space. It may begin in the middle and then include flashbacks and other narrative devices.
OPINION LEADERS	People in society who may affect the way in which others interpret a particular media text. With regard to advertising, this may be a celebrity or other endorser recommending a product.

PASSIVE AUDIENCE	The idea (now widely regarded as outdated) that audiences do not actively engage with media products, but consume and accept the messages that producers communicate.
PERSONA	The image or personality that someone, for example a celebrity, presents to the audience.
PERSONAL IDENTITY	This means your ability to relate to something that happens in a text because it has happened to you.
POLITICAL BIAS	Where a newspaper may show support for a political party through its choice of stories, style of coverage, cartoons, etc. It may be subtle and implicit, or explicit as in the case of the tabloids on election day.
PRIVILEGED SPECTATOR POSITION	Where the camera places the audience in a superior position within the narrative. The audience can then anticipate what will follow.
PRODUCTION	The process by which media products are constructed.
PRODUCTION VALUES	These are the elements of the text that tell the audience how much it cost to make. A film with high production values will include big name stars, expensive locations or special effects.
MEDIA PRODUCTS	Media texts, including television programmes, magazines, video games, newspapers etc. as well as online, social and participatory platforms.
PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTER	A radio and television broadcaster that is independent of government financed by public money and is seen to offer a public service by catering for a range of tastes.
REALISM	A style of presentation that claims to portray 'real life' accurately and authentically.
RED TOP	A British newspaper that has its name in red at the top of the front page. Red-tops have a lot of readers, but are not considered to be as serious as other newspapers.
REGULATOR	A person or body that supervises a particular industry.
REPERTOIRE OF ELEMENTS	Key features that distinguish one genre from another.
REPRESENTATION	The way in which key sections of society are presented by the media, e.g. gender, race, age, the family, etc. One important example in the media is how women are represented in magazines.
RHETORICAL QUESTION	A question asked for effect where no answer is expected. For example, in magazines the focus of the question may encourage the reader to engage in self-reflection.
SELECTION AND COMBINATION	Media producers actively choose elements of media language and place them alongside others to create specific representations or versions of reality.

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION	The practice of regarding a person as an object to be viewed only in terms of their sexual appeal and with no consideration of any other aspect of their character or personality.
SIGN/CODE	Something which communicates meaning, e.g., colours, sounds. The meaning of the sign may change according to the context, e.g., the colour red can mean passion, love, danger or speed depending on how and where it is used.
SPECIALISED AUDIENCE	A non-mass, or niche, audience that may be defined by a particular social group (for example young, aspirational females) or by a specific interest (for example skydiving).
SPLASH	The story that is given the most prominence on the front page of a newspaper.
STEREOTYPE	An exaggerated representation of someone or something. It is also where a certain group are associated with a certain set of characteristics, for example all Scotsmen are mean, blondes are dumb, etc. Stereotypes can be quick ways of communicating information in adverts and dramas, e.g. the rebellious teenager in a soap opera, as they are easily recognisable to audiences.
STRIPPED	a technique used in radio and television whereby a certain programme is broadcast at the same time every day. In radio this attracts an audience who associate a particular programme with their daily routine, for example driving home from work.
SUB-GENRE	Where a large genre is sub-divided into smaller genres, each of which has their own set of conventions. For example, the television genre can be sub-divided into teen drama, hospital drama, costume drama, etc.
SUBJECT-SPECIFIC LEXIS	The specific language and vocabulary used to engage the audience. Subject-specific lexis used on the front cover of a magazine will make the reader feel part of the group who belong to the world of that magazine. For example, terminology used on the front covers of gaming magazines.
SYNERGY	The combination of elements to maximise profits within a media organisation or product. For example, where a film soundtrack sells the film and the film sells the soundtrack.
TABLOID	Refers to the dimensions of a newspaper; a tabloid is smaller and more compact in size. However, there are further connotations attached to the term and it also tends to refer to a newspaper whose content focuses on lighter news, for example celebrity gossip, sport and television.
TAGLINE	This is the short phrase or slogan that appears in trailers and on posters. It gives a clue to the genre and storyline of the film and often includes an enigma.
TARGET AUDIENCE	The people at whom the media text is aimed.

TECHNICAL CODES	These are the way in which the text has been produced to communicate meanings and are part of media language (see Section 8).
UNDERREPRESENTATION	Certain social groups (usually minority groups) may be rarely represented or be completely absent from media products.
USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY	Suggests that active audiences seek out and use different media texts in order to satisfy a need and experience different pleasures.
VERTICAL INTEGRATION	Vertically integrated companies own all or most of the chain of production for the product. For example a film company that also owns a chain of multiplex cinemas to exhibit the film and merchandise outlets.
VIEWPOINTS	Different perspectives in relation to values, attitudes, beliefs or ideologies.
VIRAL MARKETING	Where the awareness of the product or the advertising campaign is spread through less conventional ways including social networks and the Internet. Viral marketing is so named because many of the messages use 'hosts' to spread themselves rapidly, like a biological virus.
VISUAL CODES	The visual aspects of the product that construct meaning and are part of media language, for example clothing, expression, and gesture (see Section 8).

Glossary courtesy of Illuminate Publishing and Christine Bell.