



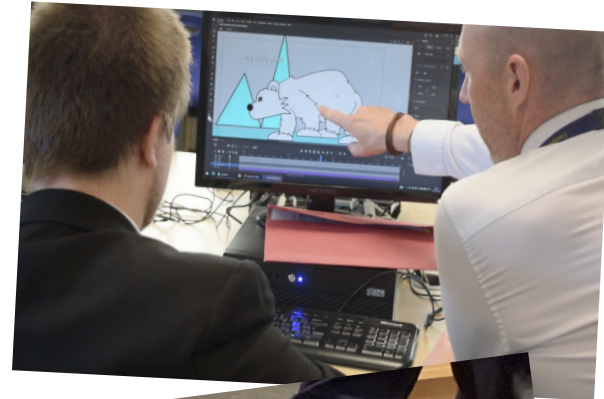
CREATIVE DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCTION

NAME:

Over the summer, you will begin developing the skills needed to succeed in Unit 1: Media Representations. This unit explores how media products create meaning, how different groups of people are represented, and how audiences interpret media messages.

The activities in this booklet are designed to help you start thinking like a media analyst and creator. They are practical, creative and interactive, giving you the opportunity to explore the media all around you while developing valuable research, analysis and critical thinking skills. Complete each task in as much detail as possible. Bring your completed booklet to your first lesson in September.

- Build foundational skills for Unit 1: Media Representations, including understanding how media creates meaning and portrays different groups.
- Develop your ability to analyse and interpret media messages like a media student.
- Engage in practical, creative activities that strengthen your research, critical thinking, and media production skills.



WHAT IS MEDIA REPRESENTATION?

Representation is the way people, places, events, issues or ideas are presented to an audience through media products.

Media creators make deliberate choices about:

- Images
- Language
- Camera angles
- Colours
- Editing
- Sound
- Layout

These choices influence how audiences understand and respond to what they see.



Think About It

Consider the following questions:

- How are teenagers represented in films and television?
- How are men and women represented differently in advertising?
- How does social media shape our views of success?
- Why might two media products represent the same topic differently?

Write your ideas below:

ACTIVITY 1: MEDIA DIARY CHALLENGE

For three days, keep a record of the media you consume.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Purpose (Entertainment, Information, Social etc)
Television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Streaming platforms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Podcasts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Gaming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Music videos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

REFLECTION

Which media platform did you use most?

What does your media diary suggest about your interests?

How might media companies use this information to target audiences?

ACTIVITY 2: MEDIA TERMINOLOGY

Unit 1 requires students to use specialist terminology. Research and define the following terms:

Term	Definition
Representation	
Audience	
Stereotype	
Denotation	
Connotation	
Media Language	
Ideology	
Bias	

ACTIVITY 3: SPOT THE STEREOTYPE

A stereotype is a simplified and often exaggerated representation of a group.

Examples might include:

- The "nerdy" student
- The "perfect" influencer
- The "strict" teacher
- The "heroic" athlete

Your Task: Find two examples of stereotypes in media products.

Media Product	Stereotype	Why is it a stereotype?
<i>e.g James Bond films</i>	<i>Women are shown as "Bond girls" who are glamorous and dependent on men</i>	<i>This is a stereotype because it presents women as less powerful and mainly valued for their looks rather than intelligence or ability</i>

REFLECTION

Why can stereotypes be problematic?

Can stereotypes ever be useful for media producers?

RICHARD DYER - STEREOTYPES

Richard Dyer argues that stereotypes are simplified and exaggerated representations of people that are widely circulated through media. They reduce individuals or groups to a few basic traits, often reinforcing existing power structures by making differences seem natural and fixed.



- Simplification: Stereotypes reduce people to a few obvious traits, ignoring complexity.
- Exaggeration: Certain characteristics are overstated to make the stereotype more noticeable.
- Repetition: Media repeats stereotypes so often that they become seen as "normal" or true.
- Power and control: Stereotypes are often created by dominant groups to maintain control over others.

ACTIVITY 4: REPRESENTATION DETECTIVE

Choose a television programme, film, YouTube channel or social media account. Analyse how one group is represented.

Examples:

- Teenagers
- Parents
- Athletes
- Teachers
- Gamers
- Men
- Women
- Different ethnic groups

Who is represented?

How are they shown?

What stereotypes can you identify?

MEDIA PRODUCT: _____

Are these representations positive, negative or mixed?

What impact might this have on audiences?

STUART HALL - RE-PRESENTING

Stuart Hall argues that media does not simply reflect reality, but re-presents it by constructing meaning. Media texts shape how we see people, events, and groups through selective choices, and these representations influence audience understanding and beliefs.

- Media constructs reality: The media doesn't show the truth—it creates a version of reality.
- Representation = meaning: The way something is shown influences how audiences understand it.
- Selective portrayal: Media producers choose what to include and what to leave out.
- Can reinforce or challenge stereotypes: Representations can either support dominant ideas or question them.
- Different readings: Audiences may interpret representations in different ways depending on their background.
- Links to power: Those who control media have influence over how groups and issues are represented.



LAURA MULVEY - MALE GAZE

Laura Mulvey argues that media, particularly film, positions audiences to view the world through a male perspective (the "male gaze"). Female characters are often presented as objects of visual pleasure, while audiences are encouraged to identify with male characters who drive the action.

- Audience positioning / Male gaze: Media often presents women from a heterosexual male viewpoint, focusing on appearance and attractiveness. Viewers are encouraged to adopt the perspective of the male character.
- Objectification: Female characters are shown as objects to be looked at, rather than active agents in the story.
- Visual pleasure: Camera angles, shots, and editing are used to create pleasure for the viewer, often at the expense of female representation.
- Influence on attitudes: These representations can shape how audiences see gender roles in real life.



ACTIVITY 5: DECODE A MUSIC VIDEO

Choose a music video and watch it carefully.

Artist / Music video	
Costume	
Setting	
Camerawork	
Editing	
Representation of gender	
Representation of lifestyle	
Overall message	

ACTIVITY 6: REPRESENTATION IN GAMING

Choose a game you play or know well.

Game title	
Who are the main characters?	
How are gender identities represented?	
How are heroes and villains represented?	
How might different audiences interpret the game differently?	

FINAL CREATIVE PROJECT

Create a Representation Portfolio

Using any format you choose (PowerPoint, Canva, Word, video), produce a portfolio that answers:

"How does media shape the way we see the world?"

Include:

- At least 5 media examples
- Analysis of representations
- Examples of stereotypes
- Audience responses
- Your own media creation
- Personal reflections

Success Criteria

- Demonstrates understanding of representation
- Uses media terminology
- Includes detailed observations
- Shows creativity and originality
- Makes links between media products and audience interpretations

Ready for September?

By completing this booklet, you will have started developing the key skills required for Unit 1: Media Representations

- Media analysis
- Research
- Critical thinking
- Audience awareness
- Understanding representations
- Creative production planning



PARK HALL
SIXTH FORM

GCSE

**STEPPING
UP**

FROM GCSE TO BTEC LEVEL 3

