



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Mark scheme

June 2003

GCE

Media Studies

Unit MED6

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UNIT 6: COMPARATIVE CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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

-

GENRE

-

NARRATIVE

-

REPRESENTATION/IDEOLOGY

-

AUDIENCE/INSTITUTION

-

RELEVANT CONTEXTS

These might include:

- the **institutional** context of production of the two texts. Each targets the audience differently and operates within and is defined by this context. This difference in context is a key factor for the target audiences and impacts on their very different production values, media language, generic conventions, ideologies and audience expectations
- audience responses to each extract – and how they may have changed
- the **representations** employed in each extract
- 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
- the **ideological position** signified by each extract. Each extract locates its ideological position explicitly
- historical context for television espionage programmes
- social agenda defined by each extract
- form and function in relation to each extract

RELEVANT IDEAS, THEORIES, DEBATES AND INFORMATION

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

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Segmentation | e.g. debates regarding how audiences are created and addressed by institutions; interpellation; audience identification, national differences and characteristics |
| Discourse & address | e.g. typical conventions in the genre; use of images; use of framing and camera angles; production values; institutional codes; audience expectations and targeting; distribution and scheduling |
| Narrative | narrative theory; different methods of constructing narrative; implicit values; enigma codes etc. |
| Institution | codes and conventions for television espionage programmes; contrasts between US and UK television programmes; creation and exploitation of target markets; each text as exemplification of its genre and institution |

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 likely to revolve around the use of the typical codes and conventions for television espionage programmes. **Differences** are likely to centre upon the obvious differences in content despite this similarity in form. **Mission Impossible** occupied a very conventional position within the genre of television espionage programmes, defining and exploiting the generic codes and conventions within this genre of programmes. It remains secure within its own, clearly established, ideological position now. **Spooks** is a contemporary programme yet attempts to move beyond the codes and conventions of the genre, to try and create a particular identity within the BBC. There are evident differences between these programmes given their different historical context and national identity. The audience for **Mission Impossible** and **Spooks** may overlap but the audience for **Spooks** is likely to be younger and expect more hi tech mise-en-scène and form.

Any **accounting** for similarities and difference should be fully rewarded – answers which move beyond simplistic historical comparisons should be rewarded more highly, as should those which are aware of the exploitation of the genre or national context. Relevant areas here are issues of form and function, framing, production values, representations employed and ideologies established, the different appeal of each programme for their audience, mode of address and generic conventions, wider context and social expectations implicit in the two extracts (representational and ideological features of each one), audience expectations of and responses to the extracts, each within its historical or national context and the cultural capital embodied in the extracts. Both depend to some degree on audience engagement. Unless the audience is secure with the genre and mode of address, they may find it difficult to engage with the extracts.

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, 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. 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 textual readings and comparisons based on a comprehensive understanding and application of all relevant Key Concepts. 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 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. 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 textual readings and comparisons. 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 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 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 synoptic ability (drawing together concepts, arguments, ideas, theories and information from different parts of the specification) in making effective textual readings and comparisons, although these may not be fully developed. 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 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 some limited evidence of synoptic ability when making textual comparisons. This may be sketchy and limited but is present. 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

The candidate is able to identify the basis for comparison of the two texts to some degree. There is weak evidence of synoptic ability in making textual comparisons, which may be confined to descriptive and simplistic points. 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 irrelevant and inaccurate detail may be included. Some comment will be included – 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> |
| 6 51-60 marks | <p>Sophisticated understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Detailed analysis of the extracts with good illustration and exemplification.</p> <p>Confident conceptual exploration. 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. Evident ability to draw out form and function of each extract within their genre.</p> <p>Clear awareness of the institutional issues relating to these extracts.</p> <p>Evident awareness of generic, cultural and historical modes of comparison for these extracts and how this impacts on textual analysis.</p> | <p>Consistent ability to analyse the extracts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of broadcast media.</p> <p>Evident understanding of these extracts within their genre.</p> | <p>Sophisticated identification of similarities and differences between the two extracts.</p> <p>Confident critical voice and clear evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with the extracts in response.</p> <p>Evident ability to identify the target audience for the extracts and to evaluate them in relation to audience, form and function.</p> <p>Balanced analysis with wide ranging focus on all stimulus materials.</p> |
| 5 41-50 marks | <p>Good understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Reasonably detailed analysis of the extracts with good illustration and exemplification.</p> <p>Appropriate conceptual exploration. 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 extract within their genre.</p> <p>Good awareness of institutional issues relating to these extracts. Awareness of generic, cultural and historical modes of comparison for these extracts and how this impacts on textual analysis.</p> | <p>Good ability to analyse the extracts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of broadcast media.</p> <p>Understanding of these extracts and their genre.</p> | <p>Good identification of similarities and differences between the two extracts.</p> <p>Identifiable critical voice and evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with the extracts in response.</p> <p>Clear ability to identify the target audience for the extracts and evaluate them in relation to audience, form and function.</p> <p>Balanced analysis with focus on all stimulus materials.</p> |

| 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> |
| 4 31-40 marks | Secure understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Reasonably detailed analysis of the extracts 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 extract as broadcast media. Secure awareness of institutional issues relating to these extracts. Reasonable awareness of generic, cultural and historical modes of comparison for these extracts and how this impacts on textual analysis. | Analyses the extracts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of broadcast media. Awareness of these extracts within their genre. | Appropriate identification of similarities and differences between the two extracts. Emerging critical voice and clear evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with the extracts in response. Sound ability to identify the target audience for the extracts and evaluate them in relation to audience, form and function. Balanced analysis with focus on all stimulus materials. |
| 3 21-30 marks | Some understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Basic analysis of the texts with little use of illustration and examples. Simplistic conceptual exploration but evidence of conceptual understanding. Competent use of appropriate terminology. Confident and evident understanding of Key Concepts. | Some synoptic ability, drawing on some contextual references. Attempts to draw out form and function of each text as broadcast media. Some awareness of institutional issues relating to these texts. Some awareness of generic, cultural and historical modes of comparison for these texts and how this impacts on textual analysis. | Attempts to analyse the extracts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of broadcast media. Some awareness of these extracts in relation to their genre. | Basic identification of similarities and differences between the two extracts. Basic evidence of critical autonomy and engagement with the extracts in response. Some ability to identify the target audience for the extracts 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> |
| 2 11-20 marks | Limited understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Limited analysis of the extracts 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 limited contextual reference. Largely unable to draw out form and function of each extract as broadcast media. Limited awareness of institutional issues relating to these extracts. Implicit basic awareness of generic, cultural and historical modes of comparison for these extracts and how this impacts on textual analysis, although this may not be explored directly. | Limited ability to analyse the extracts in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of broadcast media. Limited understanding of these extracts and their genre. | Limited identification of similarities and differences between the two extracts. Limited attempt at critical autonomy and engagement with the extracts in response. Identifies the target audience for the extracts. |
| 1 0-10 marks | Little relevant understanding of the media language used in these extracts. Describes extracts 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 extracts provided. Very little or no sense of institutional context for these extracts. Very little awareness of generic, cultural and historical modes of comparison for these extracts and how this impacts on textual analysis. | Little or no evidence of analysis in relation to ideas, theories, debates and information relevant to the study of broadcast media. | Little if any identification of similarities and differences between the two extracts. Limited or no awareness of target audience for the extracts. Little, if any, sense of critical autonomy or critical voice. |