Your notes

GCSE Media Studies: revision notes

Media audiences

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Target audiences

- A **target audience** is the group a product is aimed at.
- **Demographics** describe audiences by age, gender, income, occupation and location. Social grades (A, B, C1, C2, D and E) group people by occupation.
- **Psychographics** describe audiences by values, attitudes and lifestyle, such as "adventurous" or "eco-conscious".
- Mass audiences are large and varied; **niche audiences** are small and specialised.

How producers target audiences

- Choice of content, genre, stars, mode of address, and style of language and images.
- Scheduling (such as family shows at teatime), distribution and marketing (trailers, social media and posters).

How audiences use and respond to media

- **Uses and gratifications** theory (linked to Blumler and Katz) says audiences actively use media for information, personal identity, social interaction and entertainment (diversion).
- Audiences can take the preferred reading, a negotiated reading, or an **oppositional reading** (linked to Stuart Hall).
- Some argue heavy exposure to media can shape how people see the world (cultivation) or influence behaviour (media effects).
- Audiences today are often active and participatory: commenting, sharing and making **user-generated content**. Fans form communities (fandoms).

Key terms

Target audience	The group a media product is aimed at.

Demographics	Audience groups based on factors like age, gender and income.
Psychographics	Audience groups based on values, attitudes and lifestyle.
Niche audience	A small, specialised audience.
Uses and gratifications	The idea that audiences actively use media to meet their needs.
User-generated content	Media made by audiences, such as videos or comments.
Oppositional reading	When an audience rejects the producer's intended meaning.

Your notes

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What are demographics?
2. What are psychographics?
3. What is a niche audience?
4. What does uses and gratifications theory say?
5. What is user-generated content?
6. What is an oppositional reading?
7. Which is a way producers target an audience?
8. What is a fandom?

Answers

1. Audience groups based on factors like age, gender and income
2. Audience groups based on values, attitudes and lifestyle
3. A small, specialised audience
4. Audiences actively use media to meet their needs
5. Media made by audiences
6. When the audience rejects the intended meaning
7. Scheduling a show at a time the audience watches
8. A community of fans

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 3 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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