Your notes

GCSE Media Studies: revision notes

Social, cultural, political and historical contexts

Contents

1. Types of context
2. Why context matters
3. Using context in answers
4. Key terms
5. Quick questions
6. What to do next

Types of context

- Social and cultural **contexts**: the values, attitudes and ways of life of the time, such as changing attitudes to gender roles.
- **Political context**: power, government and politics, such as a newspaper's **political viewpoint**.
- **Historical context**: when the product was made, and what was happening then.
- **Economic context**: money and funding, such as the need to attract advertisers.

Why context matters

- Products reflect the time and society they were made in, so older products may show different values from today's.
- **Context** helps explain representations: a 1950s advert showing women only as housewives reflects the attitudes of that era.
- Newspapers' coverage of events is shaped by their **political viewpoints** and their readers.

Using context in answers

- Link specific features of a product to its **context**.
- Compare products from different times to show how **contexts** change media.

Key terms

Context	The background that influences how a media product is made and understood.
Social context	The values and ways of life of the time.
Political context	The influence of power and politics.

Historical context	When the product was made and what was happening.
Economic context	The influence of money and funding.
Political viewpoint	The political position a newspaper takes.

Quick questions

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

1. What is historical context?
2. What is political context?
3. Why might a 1950s advert show women only as housewives?
4. What is economic context?
5. Why is context important in media analysis?
6. How can comparing old and new products help?
7. What is social and cultural context?
8. How might a newspaper's political viewpoint affect its coverage?

Answers

1. When a product was made and what was happening then
2. The influence of power and politics
3. It reflects the attitudes of that time
4. The influence of money and funding
5. It helps explain why products look and say what they do
6. It shows how contexts change media
7. The values, attitudes and ways of life of the time
8. It shapes which stories it chooses and how it presents them

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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