



## **Units 3 and 4 Media**

### **Practice Exam Solutions**

Stop!

Don't look at these solutions until you have attempted the exam.

Any questions?

Check the Engage website for updated solutions, then email [practiceexams@ee.org.au](mailto:practiceexams@ee.org.au).

Note: Below are suggested solutions only. A range of responses are acceptable. Ask your teacher or tutor to look over your work and suggest improvements.

## Section A – Narrative

### Question 1a

This question does not require you to reference either of your texts.

Also known as ‘visual composition’, mise en scene can be defined as the articulation of cinematic space. This production element refers to almost everything that goes into the composition of the shot, including the composition itself: framing, movement of the camera and actors, lighting, decor, props and costumes.

### Question 1b

The setting of a fictional film narrative refers to the location and historical period in which the story takes place. This question requires you to outline an example of mise en scene and how it works together with setting. To achieve full marks you must describe and analyse a specific scene from your text.

### Question 2

For full marks, you need to a) look at 2 storylines minimum, b) look at how time is structured in each story line and c) assess how time is structured to contrast and/or relate the storylines.

In your answer it would be useful to mention one or both of the following production elements to demonstrate how time was structured in each storyline:

- Camera techniques and qualities.
- Editing/sound design and mixing.

### Question 3

Before answering this question, it is important that you have a solid understanding on the key terms and their importance to the narrative.

Opening sequences can be considered the launching point of a narrative. The opening of a film sets up the characters and their relationships for the rest of the film. Through the acting, visual composition, sound, camera and editing of the opening sequence, the audience is introduced to several narrative themes important to the understanding of the setting, its relationship to characters and the story. Be careful not to assume the opening sequence ends once the opening credits finish—it would be wise to discuss with your teacher when the opening sequence of your film ends.

Ideas and issues established in the context of the opening sequence begin the process of presenting narrative possibilities to the audience. Narrative possibilities are the ways the story may go, depending on cause and effect.

In your answer, it would be wise to explore ‘cause and effect’ as one of your story elements because this can demonstrate your knowledge of how progression of the narrative possibilities. The production element of acting is useful to analyse in this question because it is usually acting that can help to establish the relationships between characters.

Just as the opening sequence provides a beginning for the narrative, the closing of the film brings the narrative to its conclusion. It is the point of the film at which narrative possibilities are tied up. Not all narrative possibilities, however, are resolved. If this is the case in your text, make sure you explore why the producers have left these possibilities.

Be sure to use proper media terminology to display your knowledge.

## Section B – Media Texts and Society’s Values

### Question 1

It is important to remember that social values are inherent in media texts and rarely stated explicitly. The director, producer and writer of a media text will themselves be affected by certain attitudes within their society, and thus will be influenced by these values when constructing a text. Furthermore, you need to remember the target audience is also important, as often media producers will positively represent values held by the target audience and negatively represent or challenge those that do not appeal to the audience.

### Question 2a

The production context of media texts includes the year and country of production. This can help us understand the social values that the text embodies. Production context also refers to the production sources, distribution and/or exhibition processes and production personnel involved in the making of the media product. It is important to understand the production context because the nature and structure of representations in media texts are shaped by the production context of a text.

### Question 2b

This question requires you to identify the specific production context that one of your media texts was produced within. It is necessary to identify how this production context shaped the values and ideas presented by the text.

It is important to write authoritatively about the time and place in which your text was created. Using statistics or other detailed information is one way to show that you understand the period in which your text was produced and how that might have influenced its construction.

It is important not to confuse the production period of your text with its setting- these are two very different things.

### Question 3

A social discourse or issue is an idea that exists within a society during a defined moment in time. This can be related to prevailing issues within a society. For example, films created during the 1970s might convey either an anti-war sentiment or patriotic values. A good response would describe the way these ideas are reflected in the text through the use of production elements.

It is important to be able to identify a social issue that is discussed in your media texts. These issues may feed into the existing values held by a society and it is acceptable to discuss these values in your response to this question.

High scoring responses will be able to identify and describe, in a nuanced fashion, social discourses that affected the production of their media texts. It is not necessary to discuss two texts to receive full marks, however students who can show links between their texts will generally score highly.

Remember to use relevant terminology relevant such as ‘social values’, ‘representation’ and ‘construction’.

**Question 4**

Social values can be described as dominant, emerging, oppositional or alternative:

- Dominant values are held by the majority of people in a society.
- Emerging values are held by a growing number of people in a society. These values may eventually become dominant.
- Oppositional values are in direct opposition to those held by the majority of people in a society.
- Alternative values provide an alternative to the dominant values without challenging or opposing them directly.

Social values need to be identified clearly. It is incorrect to use single words like 'love' and 'families' to identify values in the text you have studied. If you want to successfully identify a social value, you will need to clearly identify the values, attitudes and beliefs held during the production period. Instead of 'families', for instance, an acceptable social value would be 'families are important'.

Students then need to discuss how social values are reflected in the texts that they have studied.

## Section C – Media Influence

### Question 1

You do not have to look at any media theories for this question.

Lists of adjectives can be useful when describing the different types of audiences, for instance:

“‘Active’ audiences are seen as individualistic, impervious to influence, rational and selective. This is in contrast to the concept of ‘passive’ audiences, which sees audiences as conformist, gullible, anomic, vulnerable and easily swayed by the media.”

### Question 2a

- Use terminology such as ‘closed’/‘open’ and ‘passive’/‘active’ to demonstrate your understanding.
- Make sure the focus of your answer is on the **audience**.
- Including who, when and where the theory originated will boost your answer.

Here is a sample answer looking at the Hypodermic Needle/Bullet Theory and the Uses and Gratification Theory:

The Hypodermic Needle/ Bullet theory originated in the United States in the 1920s and 30s and was coined by The Payne Fund Studies Group (USA) and the Frankfurt School (Germany). This theory suggests that media texts are ‘closed’ to interpretation and thus the media has a direct, immediate and powerful effect on a ‘passive’ audience. Conversely, the Uses and Gratification Theory sees audiences as consisting of individuals who determine the media they wish to consume. This theory, first devised by Paul Lazerfeld and his associates at the Structural Functionist School (USA) in the 1940s, sees texts as ‘open’ to individual interpretation and thus audiences as ‘active’ in their usage. Audiences are seen to have uses for particular forms of media and, through a process of gatekeeping, use their chosen media for personal gratification.

### Question 2b

Criticism can include methods of research, evidence used to support the theory etc.

This question gives you an opportunity to display your knowledge of a communication model/theory in further depth.

Here is a sample answer looking at the Hypodermic Needle/Bullet Theory:

The phrasing “hypodermic needle”/“bullet” is meant to give an image of a direct, strategic, and planned injection of a message into an individual. But as research methodology became more highly developed, other media theorists (such as Lazerfeld) have criticized the theory for disregarding independent thought and action. Another criticism of the Hypodermic/ Bullet theory would be that the theory was not tested but rather based on anecdotal observations and speculation, such as the reaction to Orson Welles’ ‘War of the Worlds’ radio drama (1938).

**Question 3**

Students need to first identify and describe one type of media regulation. Examples of these include the National Classification Scheme, ACMA, the Advertising Standards Board and self-imposed regulatory schemes. In discussing the media regulation that you choose you should explain how that form of regulation functions.

The second half of this question requires you to address two criticisms or arguments made in favour of your chosen regulatory scheme. For example, if you were discussing self-regulation you could explore how such a system is voluntary and therefore media participants are more likely to respond positively to suggestions made by an administrative body. The downside to such a scheme is however also to be found in its voluntary and non-enforceable nature.