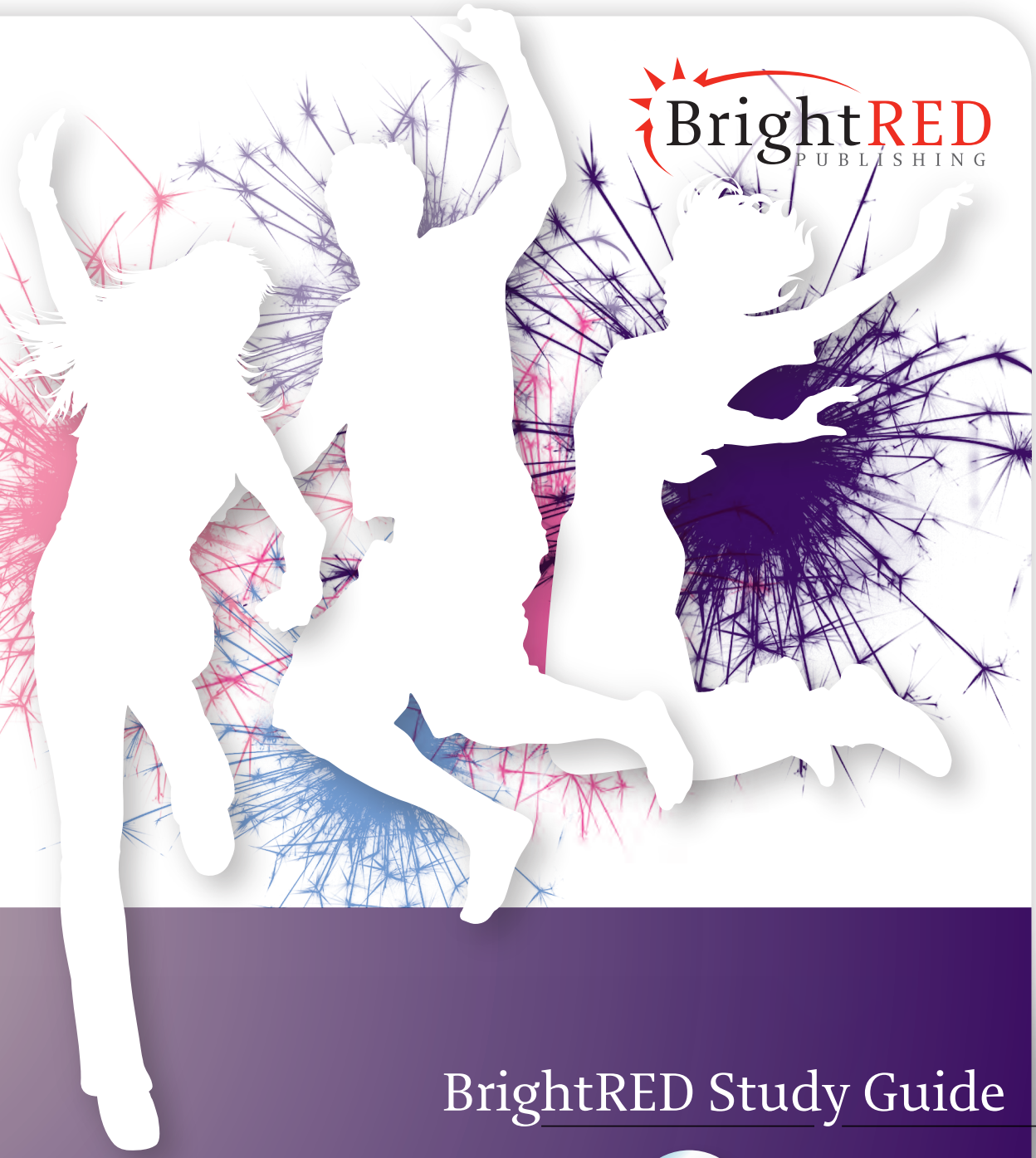
CfE HIGHER MEDIA

BrightRED PUBLISHING



BrightRED Study Guide

CfE HIGHER

MEDIA

NEW AND UP-TO-DATE • WITH SQA CHANGES

BrightRED DIGITAL ZONE

Don't forget to check out the BrightRED Digital Zone

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCING HIGHER MEDIA

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

This guide has one priority: to help you achieve. By picking this up, you've already shown that you are committed to success!

Media is a creative subject that brings together a whole range of skills from lots of different curriculum areas. Whether you are studying it for the first time or have progressed through other qualifications, Media allows you to engage with the real world around you in a way that is meaningful and practical. You both examine professional content and take on the role of a producer to create your own.

KEY ASPECTS

Much of the analysis and evaluation of content concerns seven key areas. These are known as the key aspects. They are:

Categories	These could include form, medium, **genre**, style, tone or purpose. Categories refers to the ways that media content is sorted into different types.
Narrative	Here you will use codes, **conventions** and theories to analyse story. You will also see how these affect the audience that consumes them.
Language	In this area, you will examine the meaning of such elements as use of camera, **mise en scène**, sound, editing, **fonts** and so forth. This matters both when looking at existing content and when thinking about making your own.
Representation	Representation is broadly how people, places and events are depicted. It also helps you examine the underlying message or ideas held by the producers.
Audience	Here you look at audience targeting and audience readings (mainly preferred, negotiated, differential and oppositional). You may also learn about demographic groups.
Institution	This involves examining who owns and controls media content, as well as looking at what **constraints**, both internal and external, producers face.
Society	Society is to do with the historical time and cultural **context** of the production of the content (Note: not covered in book but see Digital Zone for more information).

The course aims to give learners:

- the ability to analyse and create media content, appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of media literacy
- knowledge and understanding of the role of media within society
- the ability to plan and research when creating media content, as appropriate to purpose, audience and context
- the ability to self-evaluate.

There are two optional units in Higher Media: *Analysing Media Content* and *Creating Media Content*.

ANALYSING MEDIA CONTENT

This unit focuses on examining existing media content and building up your analysing skills. At Higher level, you are expected to do this in a detailed and complex way. You will analyse the internal key aspects of media content using categories, narrative, representation and language and the external context of audience, institution and society. You will also examine how the internal aspects are affected by the external ones.

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ONLINE

Go to our Digital Zone to find out more about society.

Another important part of analysis is exploring the role of the media. This is focused on how media content meets needs, influences behaviour and **attitudes** and achieves purposes. You will also be introduced to some of the debates concerning the media.

CREATING MEDIA CONTENT

During the *Creating Media Content* unit, you are responsible for making some kind of media content. It is where you draw in your production skills and breaks down into three main areas: planning and research, making, and evaluating. You will need to work with others, so this also helps build your team-working skills. It is likely that you will also engage with technology to create your product. The key aspects are useful to help you think up and organise your ideas and also to help evaluate how well you have created your content and the impact it has.

There is also the externally assessed exam.

EXTERNAL EXAM

The external exam is divided into three parts. There are two question papers and an assignment. The total amount of available marks is 130.

Question papers

These are the exams sat during the exam diet in May under exam conditions. It consists of two papers: Paper One (Analysis of Media Content) is focused on analysing content and context, while Paper Two is The Role of Media.

The Analysis of Media Content paper is worth 50 marks and the Role of the Media paper is worth 20.

Analysis of Media Content is divided into two sections. There are two questions focused on media content and context that ask you to apply the key aspects to texts you have studied in class. Each question is worth 20 marks. The second section asks you to analyse and compare two unseen texts (from a choice of film posters, magazine covers or print adverts). This is worth 10 marks. You will have two hours and 30 minutes to complete this question paper.

The Role of the Media paper has one question worth 20 marks. You will have one hour to complete this paper.

Paper 1	2 questions – you answer both	Analysis of content and context	2 × 20 marks
	1 question – you select option a, b or c	Unseen textual analysis	10 marks
Paper 2	1 question	Role of Media	20 marks

Assignment

The assignment involves you planning, researching, making and evaluating media content on your own. You will be set a brief by your teacher and the assignment will be completed by a deadline to allow it to be assessed by the SQA externally. You will be assessed on your content as well as your research and planning choices and your final evaluation of your product. There are 60 marks available for this section of the exam.

ONLINE

Go to our Digital Zone to access links to example question papers.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

There are many different areas that your teacher can choose to explore with you as well as a lot of possibilities when making your content. You should reflect on your learning and aim to link the knowledge gained in the two units together.

The 'Things to do and think about' section in every chapter contains useful suggestions for you to try. There may be activities to help you develop your analysis or production skills. They can be used as an introduction to some of the areas you need to examine as well, consolidation of your knowledge or as revision of what you have learned.

LIGHTING AND COLOUR

LIGHTING

Lighting helps to convey the mood or atmosphere of the screen being observed.

The audience's attention can be guided by brightly lighting an object or gesture, while keeping other, minor areas, in relative darkness. At the same time, a director can use shadows to build suspense by hiding elements (or characters) from the audience.

Even something as simple as a news interview will be lit to make sure that the audience get the right message.

The most common form of lighting is three-point lighting, which uses a back light, fill light and key light. Changing the relative strength of these lights allows for different **effects** to be created – or for the subject to be well lit.

The back light, situated behind the subject, is used to highlight the subject away from the background, making them easier to see when they move.

The key light, situated in front and (usually) to the subject's right, creates the detail of the subject's image. **High key** lighting is used where the subject needs to be seen clearly (in fashion shoots, for example). Low key lighting can be used to create mood, as with the example (left) – where the back light has been removed also. See how the subject blends into the background?

The problem with the key light is that it creates shadow on the subject, since it is only coming in from one side. Hence the fill light, which comes in from the other side, and removes the shadowing.

The example below shows the effect of a key light (left), and the addition of the fill light (right).

In order to change moods, the lighting needs to change. When the lighting is changed and *under lighting* is used (when the main source of light is underneath the subject) then characters or objects will appear distorted. It is often used in horror films.

A similar, moody effect can be created with top lighting (where the main source of light is above the character or object). However, glamour photography also uses top lighting.

When the main source of light moves to behind the character or the object, then silhouette is created. This blocks the face of a character or detail of an object from the

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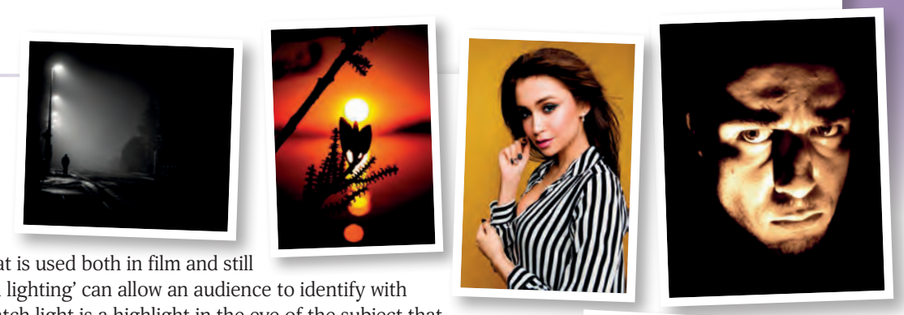
VIDEO LINK

Check out the clip at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects on how to use three-point lighting.



audience and so can be a negative effect, or can focus on the light source or the shapes formed in the silhouette, which can be positive.

A particular technique that is used both in film and still photography called 'catch lighting' can allow an audience to identify with a character, or not. The catch light is a highlight in the eye of the subject that provides depth and a life-like spark to the subject. In turn, this allows the audience to be more sympathetic towards them as emotions and thoughts can be more easily decoded. Equally, antagonists may have the catchlight deliberately removed, to deaden their eyes.

In the example (right), the happiness of the girl has been highlighted by the catchlight.

The catch light effect is used in a more intense manner in anime, where extreme close-up shots of the character are often used to highlight emotional reactions.

COLOUR

Colour works on the audiences subconscious mind to create a mood. Soap powder boxes are more often blue than yellow as research has shown that people feel that blue will have a gentler cleansing action than yellow.

Each colour has its own connotations, which can be influenced by culture, conventions or **beliefs**. For instance, the colour red connotes a wide range of things in the North-Western Hemisphere. Love, anger and danger are all part of what red can mean.

However, in the Far East, red is a colour for good luck, which is why, for Chinese New Year, there is such a predominance of red in the decorations.

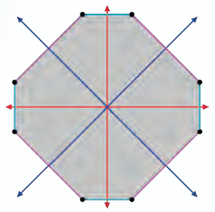
Colour can also be discussed in terms of saturation. This means that brightness and depth of the colour. A film in technicolour, for example the colour portions of *The Wizard of Oz*, are very bright and colourful. This would be described as highly saturated and carries connotations of a happy, upbeat atmosphere. It may also suggest a certain unnaturalness to the setting. In contrast, unsaturated colour, where the scene seems washed out and grey, can be used to create a sense of grittiness and harsh reality. This is frequently a feature of films that are categorised as British Social Realism such as *The Angel's Share*.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

1 Create a page of your own photographs that show the use of light as mentioned above. You should have at least three photos – back, over and under.

In each case, annotate the photo, highlighting: what light source was used; which mood or atmosphere has been created; and how an audience would be expected to react to the image.

2 Copy the diagram below into your notes and for the colours – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown and pink – note down the connotations that each colour suggests.
You can discuss this with others to see if the connotations are the same.



DON'T FORGET

In order to engage an audience with a media text, the producers will hope to use emotions. When watching a film, lighting and colours all guide the audience to particular emotional responses.

ONLINE TEST

Test your knowledge of lighting and colour at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects.

ANALYSIS

PRINT MEDIA

ONLINE

There are plenty of websites and other areas to look at; however, a fair beginners' guide can be found at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

FONTS AND TYPOGRAPHY

When any media text is being created, a great deal of thought goes into the choosing and setting of the typography – the font and the wording. Just as particular colours or body language could convey a message, so the font carries connotations of the institution using it.

Fonts come *serif* or *sans serif*, where serif refers to the little 'flick' at the ends of a letter. *Arial* is a ready example of a sans-serif font. The letters are straight, without adornment. Sans-serif fonts are seen as friendly, open, boring or plain and are preferred by people who have difficulty in reading. On the other hand, serif fonts can be seen as old-fashioned, stately, reliable or historic.

Certain media texts have a very distinctive or set style. These have been thought through and created over a period of time. For instance, there is an accepted typography for comics/graphic novels. These are sans-serif fonts and are chosen for their ease of reading and clarity when capitalised.

Newspapers have particular fonts, too. *The Times* of London created a new standard font in 1931 – *Times New Roman*. This is a serif font, and was chosen by *The Times* to focus on the stately and reliable aspects, giving the readers the idea that the newspaper could be trusted. Ironically, in the 80 years since the font was created, the font can be read as representing something that is boring and uninspired.

Fonts relate to representation of the text and, by extension, the creating institution. Fonts are chosen for their perceived qualities to the audience (and are tested through small groups). Insurance companies will seek a font that the test groups feel embodies solidity, history and safety; engineering firms will look for something that is suggestive of flair and innovation.

Fonts for film posters are as carefully chosen as for any other text.

In the first example here, the company name would be written in a clear, sans-serif font. The letters are well spaced (the spacing is called *tracking*). The clarity of the font and the space taken up by the word is suggestive of time and space – the luxury of the title. There are no garish flashes involved in this company; what you get is what you get.

The second example is creating a completely different mood. The circle outside of the wording is clearly indicating a plate – this is an advert/logo for a restaurant. The cursive font is curved, giving a soft feel to the logo; no one likes to eat spiky things. The serif on the initial 'L' is complicated and gives the idea that time has to be spent just saying it. The food of this company is not rushed, but is something to be enjoyed.

For some **brands**, like the Harry Potter films, the font has become part of the brand image or the trademark. With Coca-Cola, for instance, the italic font can be recognised even when it is in a radically different language (something you can check for yourself using your favourite web browser).

LAYOUT/ORGANISATION

The rule of thirds

Many pieces of art (including photos and posters) can be divided into three sections. In photography, this is called the Rule of Thirds. It can be applied to still media texts also.

Look at this poster for *The Greatest Showman*.

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By placing two vertical lines on this image, three clear sections can be seen. The first starts on the left and includes the first three characters. The second shows only the middle character, while the third is the character on the right.

The central third – focusing on the character in the red jacket – is where the audience eye is drawn initially. This is the largest character, and so we can assume he is the main character, too.

The body language of the main character is open to his right (audience left), which would indicate that the three characters in this third are supporting characters. The two who are physically touching are linked in some way, probably romantically. That would then leave the single blonde woman on the far left as the supporting love interest for the main character.

The same ideas can be shown with horizontal lines also.

In the mock-up of an advertising flyer right, the horizontal thirds have been created to guide the audience/readers. There is important text in the top and bottom thirds. This text indicates the date or the title of the event/product, which is what the audience needs to see.

The middle third carries an image of a modern office building with trees around it. This conveys that the event will be both forward looking (the modern build) and sensitive to nature/current issues.

DON'T FORGET

A poster is never just 'put together'. Each element in the image has been chosen and placed with extreme care to detail and the connotations that will be given.

ONLINE TEST

Test your knowledge of print media at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Look at the *vertical* thirds in the Harry Potter poster. What is the audience being drawn to see? What does it suggest about the representation or importance of each of the characters in the poster?

Then, look at how the horizontal thirds are used. How does the poster draw audience's eyes to the important things?

With both questions, use your knowledge of language codes and mise en scène, in other words, everything that you've read through in the Analysis chapters, to guide you.

INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR

DOING IT ON PURPOSE

During the Edinburgh Festival, it is almost impossible to walk down a street without being handed a flyer. These are pieces of paper, often small, which have been designed to advertise a show or performance that is being put on during the festival. The information on the sheet will include the title, creator, date, time and venue of the performance; often a promotional shot from the event; and some reviews from newspapers.

These flyers are designed to influence the behaviour of those who receive them – this is the role that they play. Those who are within the target audience will take note of the performance and will be attracted by the picture or the play, and will buy tickets and attend: their behaviour will have been influenced by the flyer.

Earlier in the Role of Media section, we looked at adverts. These are, clearly, also designed to influence the behaviour. John Lewis's Christmas adverts are designed to influence the behaviour of those who watch. The adverts pull on the emotions of the audience, often appealing to sentimentality as children or animals are shown to be cute or selfless.

The key thing with influencing behaviour is the method – appealing to emotions such as fear. Adverts on television and flyers in the street, while possibly powerful, are not dangerous enough to influence a whole society. Government films are the next level up.

VIDEO LINK

Check out the government advert at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

In response to the death rate on train tracks in Melbourne, Australia, the metro company created the animated series *Dumb Ways to Die*. Using dark humour and a very catchy song, the animations highlight to the audience the dangers of acting foolishly around the rail network. The audience is influenced by the absurdity of the animation (which likens playing on the railway track to using your private parts for piranha bait). The silliness of the 'dumb ways to die' serves to highlight the silliness of playing near a railway, and behaviour is influenced accordingly.

In the 1980s, a threat was detected from a new disease: acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). The PIF noted here was issued by the British government in order to raise awareness of the disease and influence the behaviour of the audience.

It was released nationally and avoids stating any particular target audience during the voice-over. Everyone is included in the message – and the message is based on fear. Through oppressive images – volcanoes, dark stone – heavy voice-over and the final image of a tombstone, the government sought to put fear into the hearts of the audience and scare them into changing their behaviour.

It is worth looking at one more example. What if a government does not want to influence its citizens for good?

Historically, few governments have managed to create such a barrage of propaganda designed to influence the behaviour of their people more than the Nazi government of Germany from 1933 until 1945.

Through the use of fear and long-held emotional beliefs regarding the Jewish people, Hitler and his government brought many millions of people to believe that the racist policies of the National Socialist Party were correct. The posters used grotesque, cartoon depictions of Jews, coupled with stylised, ideal depictions of the 'Master Race'. The population of Germany – the audience – was to be influenced against the Jews and so not care or act when the government 'sorted the problem'.

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Detection of this type of influence is not, sadly, confined to history. As the 21st century dawned, it was clear that six companies effectively govern all the news and media in the world. One of these is semi-British (21st Century Fox); the rest are American.

In recent years, the UK has gone through one Independence Referendum in Scotland in 2014, along with a referendum to decide to leave the European Union in 2016. The United States has elected a new President in 2016 – the first to have no political background whatsoever.

All three of these campaigns were fought through the use of multi-media. All three of these campaigns fought hard to influence the behaviour of the audiences, through news channels, posters and adverts. All three campaigns used the same methods that are used in theatre flyers and Christmas adverts: strong emotions and images, along with the fear tactics used by governments.

ONLINE

Go to our Digital Zone at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects for more links to investigate this topic!

INTENTIONAL OR UNINTENTIONAL?

The messages that media texts send to audiences are mainly intended. However, sometimes the texts reinforce attitudes and behaviours unintentionally.

One of the biggest problems with advertising is the way in which they reinforce gender stereotypes. Children's advertising already begins to reinforce particular ideas about gender. Toys are split by gender very clearly, with certain products aimed at boys and others at girls. The toys aimed at boys tend to be technology based, suggesting that boys are more suited to technology, computers and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields whereas girls are excluded. Girls face a similar narrow selection of toys. Most girl-centred toys seem focused on caring and appearance. These adverts reinforce the idea that women are weak and men are strong. It also limits girls to either a nurturing role or makes them believe that appearance is all that matters. Boys are limited as well. They are forced into an attitude of strength and power and not shown as being permitted to like nurturing and caring. This narrowing of attitudes creates a sexist society where male and female roles are strictly delineated. Adult advertising also reinforces this delineation. The majority of adverts for technology are male-focused whereas whereas a similar majority of adverts for domestic products were female orientated.

A similar criticism of gender stereotype reinforcement is often levelled at Disney and its princess films in particular. Disney princesses are said to be focused on beauty and romance, waiting for a prince to come save them. Disney is challenging this portrayal of women through its more recent Disney princesses, such as Elsa and Anna from *Frozen*, who save each other through their sisterly bond and Moana, where the titular lead character has no romantic storyline and drives the entire film. Disney's Dream Big, Princess advertising also explicitly linked the princesses to a more feminist portrayal of gender.

DON'T FORGET

Purpose will often help you work out what behaviour or attitude a text is aiming to influence. Representation is also very important here.

THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Watch an episode of a current television programme you enjoy. What messages about behaviour and attitudes are being suggested to the audience? Think about gender, age, race, education level and so forth. Look at a film or programme made in the past. How do the messages it sends about behaviour or attitudes differ from ones in the present day?

ONLINE TEST

Test your knowledge of influencing behaviour at www.brightredbooks.net/subjects

BrightRED Study Guides

CfE HIGHER

MEDIA

Wendy Elrick and Keith Hay

This BrightRED Study Guide is the ultimate companion to your CfE Higher Media studies! Written by our trusted authors and experienced Media teachers, Wendy Elrick and Keith Hay, this book is full-colour and packed with clear and accessible information, excellent examples, activities and advice. Inside, you will find:

- **All the essential course information, fully up-to-date with SQA course changes,** arranged in easily digestible double-page topic spreads.
- **Detailed full-colour** diagrams, illustrations and data boxes to make sure all that study sticks!
- ***Don't forget*** pointers offering advice on the key facts to remember, and on how to avoid common mistakes.
- ***Things to do and think about*** sections encouraging the regular review of key points covered.
- ***Digital Zone* activities and tests** to supercharge your learning efforts online!
- **A glossary** of key terms to help when revising.

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