

Scheme of Learning: TV and the Sci-Fi Genre

Topic Sequence:							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Semiotics and Representation	Media Theory	The Film Industry	Magazines and Newspapers	TV and the Sci-Fi Genre	Advertising	Online, Social and Participatory Media	Radio and Music Videos

Topic Overview:

This element of the course covers all four areas of the theoretical framework, and so the CSPs must be studied in detail. The lessons explore representation of character and setting, introducing the concept of NICS (Narrative, Iconography, Character and Setting) to add to previous learning on semiotic analyses, placing analysis specifically in terms of moving image. The audiences of these media products is also considered, and how the technologies of production have changed over time. Pupils will look at a typical 1960s living room in order to contextualise 'Dr Who – An Unearthly Child' and will consider how and why the audience would have responded to it. This will then be repeated in terms of 'His Dark Materials', a 2019 collaboration between the BBC, also responsible for 'Dr Who', and HBO, a subscription service in America. The unit finishes with a Media Paper 2 Section A, in which the pupils view a clip from one of the CSPs, and answer a number of questions on both of the CSPs.

Lesson Sequence:

The unit begins with an important lesson on genre. Genre is a concept which is very simple, but in Media Studies the academic understanding is essential, and the ability to be able to talk about it in detail, rather than just saying a 'type' of something, is paramount. This lesson is accompanied by an important additional reading article, which was written by a US university professor. It is challenging, but the pupils will gain so much from it!

From there we move onto the *Dr Who* lessons which begin with a revision of genre, focusing specifically on Science-fiction. The CSP is then contextualised in terms of the Media Industry, firstly as a piece of sci-fi, and then through its importance to the BBC. The BBC as an entity is then revisited, having laid then groundwork for this learning in the film industry unit. We look at funding models, the history of the company, and how television is regulated. The pupils then actually watch the episode, and analyse it in terms of NICS and semiotics, and they also delve deeper into character and narrative, applying theory from the second unit of learning such as Propp, Todorov, and Uses and Gratifications.

The *His Dark Materials* lessons follow a similar pattern, exploring each part of the theoretical framework in turn, and ensuring comparisons are made between the CSPs (e.g. in terms of the BBC owning *Dr Who* yet collaborating on *His Dark Materials*). The pupils have a workbook for this section, to ensure that they use a different learning style from the *Dr Who* section. There is also space in the booklet to add their own comparisons, encouraging independent study.

The unit is assessed through a multiple choice knowledge test, exploring the pupils' skills of recollection of terminology and contexts, as well as how theories may be applied to the CSPs. They will then complete a Media Paper 2 Section A, which always shows a clip from one of the CSPs, and then asks a number of questions covering all four elements of the theoretical framework, and requires comparison of the two CSPs. This will be marked and placed in their folders for future reference of question style, marking styles and a reminder of what to expect!

Sequence of Lessons:		Topic Resources:	
1	Introduction to Genre	Knowledge Map: 1. Knowledge Map: Language, Audiences, Industries, Representations 2. Full Revision Guide	Close Study Products: <i>Dr Who: An Unearthly Child, His Dark Materials S02E01 – The City of Magpies</i>
			Assessment: Knowledge: There is a multiple choice knowledge test at the end of the study of both CSPs. Application of Knowledge: Pupils will watch a clip from one of the CSPs, and answer exam-style questions on it, including a comparison question.
2-9	Dr Who: <i>An Unearthly Child</i> Lessons		
10-15	His Dark Materials S02E01: <i>The City of Magpies</i> Lessons	Supportive Reading, linking to Toynbee Literacy and Reading Policy:	
		Lesson 1	John Reich – <i>What is Genre and How is it Determined?</i>
16	Recap and Knowledge Test	Lessons 2-9	Peter Henshuls and Laurence Marcus – Review of <i>An Unearthly Child</i> '
		Lessons 10-12	Nathan Smith – <i>His Dark Materials is finally getting told without (much) backlash</i>
17	Exam-Style Assessment Questions Involving Clip	Lessons 13-15	Madison Vain – <i>Why the HDM books were considered 'dangerous'</i>