

# MEDIA STUDIES - A LEVEL



Our two-year A-Level explores the modern media landscape as well as providing numerous critical perspectives to explain the way everything works. The media is the prism through which we understand the outside world and (increasingly) ourselves. The aim of this course is to understand how and why that prism works as it does

## BEFORE YOU START



Clay Shirky is a very useful starting point for the course – he provides a very concise overview of the ways the landscape has changed (and the implications). **After you've done task 3** (in the blue box below) watch this TED talk video and make notes on his key points

[https://www.ted.com/talks/clay\\_shirky\\_how\\_social\\_media\\_can\\_make\\_history?subtitle=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/clay_shirky_how_social_media_can_make_history?subtitle=en)

### Wider Reading/ viewing ...

**Here Comes Everybody** : Clay Shirky  
**Cyberbia (The Dangerous Idea That's Changing how We Live and who We are)** : James Harkin

**Too Much Information** : Dave Gorman  
**So, You've Been Publicly Shamed** : John Ronson

**Secrets of Cinema** – Film Critic Mark Kermode talks you through the conventions and history of the most enduring genres in cinema. Well worth a watch.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bbn5pt>

### 1. Do some research into the following British TV institutions



When did they begin broadcasting? What were they set up to do? What makes each of these institutions unique? How have they had to adapt their delivery and content to respond to the digital revolution?

You could present your findings as a collection of notes, a poster or a PowerPoint.

### 2. You could also research some of the theorists we will explore in detail on the course – here are few names to get you started ... Try and find three key ideas for each theorist

Roland Barthes (Semiotics and Structuralism)  
Vladimir Propp (Narratology)  
Steve Neale (Genre Theory)  
Stuart Hall (Representation Theory)

Lisbet Van Zoonen (Feminism)  
Paul Gilroy (Post Colonialism)  
Noam Chomsky (Marxism)  
Jean Baudrillard (Postmodernism)  
Marshall McLuhan (Globalisation)



### 3. How has media consumption changed in the last few decades?

#### DO THIS BEFORE YOU WATCH THE TED TALK

First consider your own consumption – what are the changes that you can remember? What technology do you have access to now that you didn't when you were younger? What are the platforms or social networks you now couldn't live without? Why?

Then interview older members of your family about the changes they can remember. How was the landscape different when they were your age? Start with parents or guardians but also give grandparents a call if you are able to. Make a note of everyone's responses and score a bonus point any time anyone uses the phrase 'in my day'.

### 4. Write a 500 word review of your favourite film or TV show.

Give me a *brief* overview of the plot or story (no more than a paragraph) then consider the specific reasons you like it ... These might include thoughts on genre, story, themes/ messages, actors, memories associated with it ... but any other factors you think are significant can also be considered

Research and list 10 careers in the creative industries

Choose three from the list and outline the role and expectations in more detail

Review those three to show why you would be interested or suitable for that career

LITERACY TASK

KNOW THIS TASK

DO THIS TASK

CAREERS TASK