

Year 10 Media Knowledge Booklet

Term 5

Name:

Class:



Knowledge Organiser - GCSE Media Studies – Term 5

1. Newspapers, Journalism, Propaganda
2. News Online, Newspaper Websites

Big Questions:

- What are the key conventions of newspapers?
- Where does news come from?
- How do newspapers use language techniques to influence audiences?
- How do newspapers use images to influence audiences?
- Why do newspapers present some issues in a particular way?
- How has digital convergence impacted the news industry?
- How is news content shaped by ownership?
- How is legislation and regulation applied to newspapers?
- How does The Sun use media language to express viewpoints and ideologies?
- How does The Guardian use media language to express viewpoints and ideologies?
- How does The Sun website use media language and convergence to target audiences?

SET PRODUCTS:

- **THE SUN FRONT PAGE (1.1.21)**
- **THE GUARDIAN FRONT PAGE (18.1.22)**
- **www.thesun.co.uk**



NEWSPAPERS: KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY

Newspapers: Terminology, Codes and Theory

LESSON 1: Local News National News International News Bias Broadsheet Middle-Market Tabloid <i>Social class</i> <i>categories:</i> <i>A, B, C1, C2, D, E</i> Target audience Demographic Core buyer	LESSON 2: Hard News Soft News The 5 Ws Fact Opinion Balance Impartiality Objectivity Interview Sources News Agencies News Aggregators Tip-Off Eyewitness Press Release	LESSON 3: Hyperbolic Sensationalist Dramatised Scandal Provocative Controversial Embellishment Alliteration Pun Emotive Language	<i>Representation</i> Stereotypes Gender Ethnicity Cultural diversity Age Nation Issues Social class National identity Sexuality	Infotainment <i>Star Theory (Dyer)</i> LESSON 6: Market Research Segmentation National <i>Readership Survey (NRS)</i>	Rupert Murdoch Ethics Exposure <i>Guardian Media Group/Scott Trust Ltd.</i>
<i>Codes/Conventions:</i> Masthead Headlines Strapline Caption Anchor Columns Byline Earpiece Dateline Splash Jump line Crosshead Pull quote Side banner Copy Connotation Denotation	<i>News Values Theory:</i> <i>Gatekeeping</i> <i>Galtung and Ruge</i> Frequency Threshold Unambiguity Proximity Predictability Unexpectedness Continuity Composition Ref. to elite nations Ref. to elite persons Personalisation Negativity Visual imperative	LESSON 4: <i>Camera Angles</i> • High Angle • Over the Shoulder • Long Shot • Establishing Shot • Mid Shot • Low Angle • Extreme Close Up • Close Up <i>Mise en Scene</i> • Setting • Colourisation • Lighting • Pose • Facial expression • Hair and make-up • Costume • Positioning • Framing	Propaganda Agenda <i>Theory: Male/Female Gaze (Mulvey)</i> LESSON 5: Immigrant Migrant Asylum seeker Refugee <i>Hypodermic Needle Theory</i> <i>Cultivation Theory</i> <i>Uses and Gratifications Theory (Blumler and Katz)</i> • Entertainment • Information • Personal Identity • Social Interaction	LESSON 7: Convergence Cross-media Cross-platform Digital platform Social Media Synergy Distribution <i>The Association of Newspaper and Magazine Wholesalers (ANMW)</i> <i>Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC)</i> LESSON 8: Ownership Organisation Institution Mediation <i>News Corp/News UK</i>	<i>Ideology</i> Right-Wing Conservative Left-Wing Liberal Patriarchal Heterosexual Familial Capitalist Bourgeois Legislation Regulation Defamation Slander Libel Gagging order Injunction <i>Press Complaints Commission (PCC)</i> <i>Independent Press Standards</i> <i>Organisation (IPSO)</i> Privacy Accuracy Harassment

Set Product – Front Page of The Sun (1.1.21)

THE Sun HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS

Friday, January 1, 2021 **THE PEOPLE'S PAPER** 60p thesun.co.uk

PM: BRITAIN BREXPECTS
By KATE FERGUSON, Westminster Correspondent
BORIS Johnson last night heralded a new Brexit dawn as he vowed to "turbocharge" Britain with our newfound freedom.
Full Story – Pages Six and Seven

Promise . . . Johnson

SUN NEW YEAR CAMPAIGN

As 2021 dawns, we call on YOU to sign up for Britain's vaccination volunteer force. So...

This is a terrific campaign...vaccine is the only way out
GARY LINEKER

I see Covid up close with my Derek...let's all club together
KATE GARRAWAY

THE Sun SAYS
THE Sun urges our fantastic readers today to join a "Jabs Army" of volunteers to help get millions of Brits vaccinated rapidly against Covid.
So many of us have longed to play a more active role in beating this terrible disease. Now, on this first day of a new year and a new era for Britain, we can. Through this major Sun campaign, backed by the NHS and the Government, you can join 50,000 volunteers in a crucial job . . . helping to run pop-up medical centres designed to immunise 15 million people by March.
It is a vast logistical challenge which needs **YOU**, as a Steward Volunteer, to keep it running smoothly and safely.
This will be the year we conquer Covid. The Sun's Jabs Army can play a key part.
Turn the page to learn how to sign up.

JOIN OUR JABS ARMY

JABS ARMY
Sun

The Sun is a right wing, British tabloid newspaper.

Component 1:
Exploring the Media
Focus areas:
Media language
Representation
Media industries
Audiences
Media contexts

THE PRODUCT

- *The Sun* is a British tabloid daily newspaper owned by News UK, a subsidiary of right-wing, Australian-born American media baron Rupert Murdoch's News Corp.
- It was originally published six days a week until News Corp also started producing *The Sun on Sunday* in 2012.
- *The Sun* has an average daily print circulation of roughly 1.3 million copies in the UK and a daily readership of around 2.3 million (<https://www.hurstmidiacompany.co.uk/the-sun-profile/>). *The Sun* stopped releasing its circulation figures in 2020.
- News Corp describe *The Sun* as, "an instigator, an entertainer, a cultural reference point, a finger on the pulse, a daily relationship." The format of the print paper is tabloid, and it is colloquially known as a 'red top'.
- The majority of its print audience is male, C2DE and aged between 35–64 years old.
- In a recent YouGov survey (https://yougov.co.uk/topics/media/explore/newspaper/The_Sun), 97% of people surveyed had heard of *The Sun*, but only 29% liked it.

PART 1: STARTING POINTS – Media Language

Consider codes and conventions and how media language communicates meanings:

- The masthead is in block text and uses the colours red and white. Other newspapers in the UK, such as *The Mirror*, *The Sunday People* and *The Daily Star*, all use this design. These are

termed 'red tops' as they specialise in tabloid journalism – journalism that often relies on sensationalism, celebrities, and gossip. Tabloids are also renowned for simplifying complex political issues.

- The headline "Join our jabs army" uses an imperative to call readers to action, asking them to volunteer as a steward at the vaccination centres. The choice of the term "army" for the campaign frames Covid as a common, tangible enemy that the readers can help defeat. The use of military language for a medical story is typical of tabloids, who often use it in sports stories too. The use of "our" connotes that *The Sun* is a proactive, dynamic paper that is helping the country.
- The puff "Jabs army" is in the shape of a heart, with a Union Flag image, making it appear like a badge the volunteers might receive or a logo they might wear to connect them to the scheme. The heart juxtaposes the term army, but it connotes that the group's actions will be caring and generous. The flag also implies that helping to 'fight' covid is a matter of national pride and patriotism.
- The main image is a photoshopped picture of the clock face on the Elizabeth Tower (also known as Big Ben). This is an iconic symbol of British culture and would be recognised by most of the audience, especially on 1st January when many people would have heard Big Ben tolling at midnight to bring in the new year. The designer has replaced the clock hand with a syringe, which highlights that this story is about vaccinations. The needle pointing to 12 is an indication of the new year arriving, whilst also suggesting to the audience that time is of the greatest importance when it comes to distributing the vaccination. This sense of urgency is reinforced in the body copy of the article, "help get millions vaccinated rapidly".

- The pull quotes have been carefully chosen to appeal to *The Sun*'s mainstreamer audience. Gary Lineker and Kate Garraway are trusted celebrities with personal experiences of Covid-19 within their families, which have been widely reported in the press. Each quote serves a different purpose for the paper. Lineker is

praising the campaign itself, therefore giving it his endorsement. Meanwhile Garraway's is more emotive and personal, "I see Covid up close with my Derek", using collective pronouns to create a sense of positivity and relatability, "let's all club together".

- The opening to the article is on the right third of the cover, and it begins with "The Sun says...", suggesting the newspaper has real influence and reinforces their strength of opinion on this matter. The standfirst uses flattery, "our fantastic readers", to encourage the audience to get involved in the campaign. Later in the article, they build a sense of community with the use of collective pronouns, "us" and "we", whilst the continued use of direct address "YOU" reinforces the jingoistic tone of the headline.

- The off-lead story positioned in the masthead pictures the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, with his thumbs up. This image connotes positivity and optimism. The byline indicates that this is a political story and will involve the government. This is supported by the headline "PM: Britain Brexpects", which is an intertextual link to two historical British leaders, Churchill and Nelson. By aligning Johnson with these two people, it is clear *The Sun's* ideology in this article is pro-Johnson and pro-Brexit.

Possible areas for further investigation are:

- **Codes and conventions of newspaper covers** – layout, use of cover photographs/images, house style, mastheads. Emotive vs. formal language to engage different audience responses.

- **Roland Barthes enigma codes** – headlines used to tease people to want to read certain stories.

PART 2: STARTING POINTS – Contexts and representations

Social, historical and political contexts:

- COVID-19 is a global pandemic. The disease was first identified in December 2019, before the pandemic was declared in March 2020.

- It was clear that a mass immunisation programme was essential to help prevent the

spread of the disease. At the start of 2020, the world saw unprecedented levels of funding for vaccine research and development (R&D). By December 2020, the UK became the first western country to license a vaccine against Covid, which is astonishingly fast given that, on average, a vaccine usually takes 10–15 years to accomplish. By January 2021, the NHS had delivered more than 1 million vaccinations, colloquially known as jabs.

- On 23 June 2016, citizens of the UK voted to leave the European Union. This was nicknamed 'Brexit'. The vote was very close with 51.9% voting leave and 48.1% voting remain. Boris Johnson was a figurehead of the Leave campaign, which *The Sun* newspaper supported.

- During World War Two, Winston Churchill gave a rallying speech in which he quoted Horatio Nelson, "England expects that every man will do his duty". This was slightly altered to "Britain expects that you too, this day will do your duty" on a World War Two poster and has now become a much-quoted phrase in the tabloid press.

- Kate Garraway is a popular TV broadcaster in the UK, having co-hosted *Good Morning Britain* since 2014, and appearing on numerous shows from *Strictly Come Dancing* to *I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here*. Her husband, Derek Draper, was left seriously ill after contracting Covid-19.

- Gary Lineker is a former England footballer and now a popular sports presenter on BBC's Match of the Day. He has 8.5 million followers on Twitter. In April 2020, he donated £140,000 to the British Red Cross emergency response to the Coronavirus crisis in the UK.

- In its early years, *The Sun* nominally supported the Labour party but has moved back and forth between Labour and the Conservatives, depending on party leadership. Today, *The Sun* is described as having political allegiance to the Conservative party and does not support the EU. The paper has always been very vocal in telling its readers how they should act, whether voting, during lockdown or getting vaccinated. For example, "Boris ticks all the boxes" in 2019,

“Stay home” in 2020 and “As 1.5M miss vax... don’t blow it Britain!” in 2021.

- During the pandemic, news media played a crucial role in communicating public health and policy information. Traditional newspaper coverage and representations of issues were important amidst increasing disinformation and conspiracy theories spread online.
- Militaristic language is so embedded in the government and media’s representation of the medical world that this has come to be normalised by audiences. Hospitals are the ‘frontline’, healthcare workers are ‘heroes’ and we ‘fight’ and ‘battle’ disease.
- The vaccine rollout began in December 2020 and worked in phases, prioritising the population according to vulnerability and age. The UK’s rollout was among the fastest in the world. Consider the representation of events and issues:
- Covid-19 is represented as an enemy on this front cover with media language framing the pandemic as a war. In line with their previous representations of the pandemic, Covid is a disease to “conquer”. Such language is used in this context to motivate and inspire action in the audience, encouraging them to join the “Jabs army”. The idea that Covid is an invader is reinforced with *The Sun*’s use of nationalistic imagery, including the Union Flag and Big Ben.
- Getting vaccinated is represented as a positive action by *The Sun*. This is clear in their repeated call for readers to support the roll out of vaccinations, “Join our jabs army”. By encouraging the public to join their campaign they are supporting the vaccination programme, making it clear that when the reader’s age group is allowed to get vaccinated, they should. The use of endorsements, along with ‘The Sun says...’ implies the reader should trust its viewpoint. Getting vaccinated is represented as a matter of urgency with the combined use of the clock face, imperative verbs, and terms such as “rapidly”.
- Brexit is represented positively in the off lead. *The Sun* suggests this political decision

has brought “newfound freedom” to the UK, while terms such as “heralded” and “dawn” imply Britain has a great future away from the EU. This is in line with *The Sun*’s pro-leave, isolationist ideology.

Section B

PART 3: STARTING POINTS – Media Industries

Industry context:

- Newspapers used to be hugely profitable, but the industry was not prepared for the arrival of the internet in the 1990s. Premium news was given away for free, and publishers didn’t take control of advertising, opening up a gap for Google and Facebook to fill. As a result, the modern business of news is in relentless decline. The bulk of advertising income is now hoovered up by Google and Facebook and newspapers have had to make significant cuts to their costs, including staff. Over the past decade, media groups have tried various strategies to boost their revenues, from subscription (e.g. *The Times*) and membership (e.g. *The Guardian*) models, to relying solely on advertising and diversification (e.g. *The Sun*).
- Newspapers are self-regulated, with editors expected to follow the Editors’ Code of Practice. If readers find any content in breach of this code, they may complain to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO).

Consider the nature of media production, including by large organisations, who own the products they produce, and by individuals and groups:

Newspaper production consists of a series of stages, each overseen by the newspaper’s editor.

Pre-press includes:

- Newsgathering – the editor sets the agenda for the paper, ideas are generated by journalists, stories are written, photographs are taken, and the editor signs off on stories.
- Advertising – the sales team sells space in the newspaper and on the website to brands looking to promote themselves.

Design – the newspaper is laid out by a page designer, arranging stories and advertising according to guidelines set by the editor and advertising teams.

Press includes:

- Publishing – after editorial sign-off, the paper is published on paper or online.
- Distribution – the finished print paper is sent to newsagents and supermarkets. The digital paper is distributed on *The Sun* app, meanwhile digital stories are pushed-out to Apple News and social media platforms.

Areas for further research:

- The newspaper, owner, editor, writers, photographers, designers – exploration of these roles, their position and impact in the production process.
- Synergy with other brands and promotions in order to fund production and/or market the paper.

Consider the importance of funding:

• Print newspapers earn revenue from their advertisements and so, in this sense, journalism is being seen more and more as a commodity, whose purpose is both profit and power. £1 in every £7 spent on groceries is spent by a *Sun* reader, making it a very attractive advertising vehicle. In addition to adverts, which are obvious in their purpose, *The Sun* also features advertorials – content written by journalists, which although looking like editorial copy is actually an advert that has been paid for by the brand. An advertorial carries more weight with an audience as it seemingly has the validation of the publication and journalist.

• As circulation figures of print news continues to drop and advertisers are choosing to leave if figures drop too low, newspapers are under increasing pressure to capture audiences. Therefore, online advertising revenues for *The Sun*, as well as diversifying into different areas (e.g. Sun Vegas, Sun Bets, etc.), are essential.

Consider the impact of technologies, and convergence:

• Readers can consume all the content from the print newspaper on the website <https://www.thesun.co.uk> for free. Readers can also subscribe to a digital edition of the print newspaper for £4.99 a week. The digital edition of the print newspaper is consumed through *The Sun* app, which is available on iOS and Android devices.

• Statistics around online reach and readership can be slippery, with many newspapers (including *The Mirror* and *MailOnline*) claiming to have the biggest. From a study in 2021 (PAMCo), *The Sun* online reached 6 million people a day. However, their rivals argue it is not quantity, but quality of engagement that matters, and how long each reader spends on the site is more important. *The MailOnline* points to having 5.4 billion minutes of engagement by readers per month across print and digital, versus only 3.1 billion minutes for *The Sun*.

• To boost its engagement beyond its target audience, *The Sun* supplies free content to Apple News. The click-throughs from the UK's most popular news app supply 23% of *The Sun*'s page views.

• Readers can follow *The Sun* on social media platforms too – Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram. Each account offers different content to different audiences.

Areas for further research: examples of stories, adverts and *The Sun* brands to exemplify the use of technology, funding, regulation and audiences.

PART 4: STARTING POINTS – Audiences

Consider target audiences:

• *The Sun*, both online and in print, targets the lower to middle social classes with its biggest audience share coming from the C2DE demographic. Although it is very close, the majority of print and online readers are male. Most of its print readers are between 45 and 64, whereas as many as 60% of online readers are below the age of 34.

According to ascento.co.uk, the average reading age of the UK population is 9 years old. *The Sun* has a reading age of 8 years. Using words in bold, lots of visuals and smaller chunks of text means they are purposefully making their product accessible to everyone and especially appealing to members of our society who have weaker literacy skills or just want an easy read. This helps explain why *The Sun* is "The People's Paper" as stated by its tagline. In addition, this way of formatting makes it easier to read at speed, on the daily commute for example, and to skim and scan to find specific articles that interest you.

- Promotions such as Sun Hols, where readers have to collect tokens, appeals to low-income demographics, whilst also building loyalty between the brand and the reader.

Consider theoretical perspectives:

- Active/Passive audience. Historically, readers of print newspapers were considered to be passive (i.e. they read what was in front of them and believed it), especially as there is an expectation that what is shared in the news genre is true. However, it is now understood that audiences are in fact active and read stories according to their own context, beliefs, and values. This potentially changes the way they interpret the information they are given.

Areas for further research: examples of layout and design, content, adverts, and *The Sun* brands to exemplify the different appeals to audiences.

What we miss about working in the office

→ G2



A bottle of Warhol 75 please

When art and wine collide

→ G2



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The Guardian

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Cummings accuses PM of lying over No 10 party

Rowena Mason
Heather Stewart

Dominic Cummings has accused Boris Johnson of lying after No 10 denied the prime minister was warned against allowing a “bring your own booze” party during the first lockdown.

Johnson admitted to parliament last week that he attended drinks in the Downing Street garden on May 20, 2020, but claimed he had not realised it was a social gathering.

The event was organised by Johnson’s principal private secretary (PPS), Martin Reynolds, who told people to “bring your own booze” – but No 10 denies that the prime minister saw the emailed invitation to about 100 staff. It has also denied allegations that two senior staffers warned Johnson not to go ahead with the event, saying this was “not true”.

But Cummings, a former senior aide to the prime minister, wrote a new blog post yesterday challenging that account. He said he personally told Reynolds that the invitation broke the rules and claimed Reynolds replied: “So long as it’s socially

distanced I think it’s OK, I’ll check with the PM if he’s happy for it to go ahead.”

Cummings then said that during a discussion over the future of the cabinet secretary and Reynolds, he had said to the prime minister something like: “Martin’s invited the building to a drinks party, this is what I’m talking about, you’ve got to grip this madhouse.”

Cummings added: “The PM waved it aside. I had told him repeatedly the PPS should be replaced, as had other competent officials who knew the whole structure needed a huge upgrade in personnel and management. ‘He’s MY guy, I don’t want you replacing him with YOUR person.’ (Yes, this says a lot.) I went home to bed at 23ish, still very ill from Covid.”

He claims Reynolds had checked with Johnson whether the party should go ahead, the prime minister agreed it should and they both went to the party.

Another former Downing Street staffer told the Guardian: “It is inconceivable: there is no way Martin would go ahead without checking with Boris. There is no way any PPS would. If two



▲ The prime minister, Boris Johnson, jogs with his dog, Dilyn, through St James’s Park near Downing Street yesterday

UK sending anti-tank weapons to Ukraine

Dan Sabbagh
Defence and security editor

Britain has begun supplying Ukraine with new light anti-tank weapons in response to “the increasingly threatening behaviour from Russia”, it was announced yesterday.

The ratcheting up of military support comes as the Kremlin continues to step up troop deployments by moving forces into Belarus, which neighbours Ukraine to the north, and is considered the most likely route for any invasion.

“We have taken the decision to supply Ukraine with

Inquiry launched into Mone over ‘VIP lane’ deal

David Conn

The House of Lords commissioner for standards has launched an investigation into the Conservative peer Michelle Mone, relating to the PPE company awarded £203m in

government contracts via the “VIP lane” after she referred it to the Cabinet Office in May 2020.

The investigation follows a complaint by the Labour peer George Foulkes on 6 January, after the Guardian reported that leaked files appear to suggest Lady Mone and her husband, the Isle of Man-based

financier Douglas Barrowman, were secretly involved in the company, PPE Medpro.

Foulkes asked the commissioner to investigate whether Mone may have breached the Lords code of conduct by failing to declare an interest in the company, and by lobbying for it to be awarded government contracts.

The commissioner confirmed the investigation would be for “alleged involvement in procuring contracts for PPE Medpro, leading to potential breaches” of three provisions of the Lords code, which cover the requirement

The Guardian is a left wing, British broadsheet newspaper.

GCSE Component 1:

Exploring the Media

Focus areas: Media language Representation Media contexts

THE PRODUCT

- *The Guardian* is a British national daily newspaper with an average daily print circulation of approximately 105,000 in the UK, comprising 53,902 newsstand sales and 51,232 subscriptions (July 2021). Since August 2021, circulation numbers are no longer publicly available.
- *The Guardian* newspaper targets a welleducated, affluent, digitally-savvy, liberal audience. The demographic is 86% ABC1. 54% of *The Guardian* readers are male, and the average age of the print reader is 54. Originally, *The Guardian*'s format was broadsheet, but for cost reasons and changing consumer needs it is now printed in tabloid format.

PART 1: STARTING POINTS – Media Language

Consider how choice of elements of media language portrays aspects of reality and conveys messages and values:

- The dominant image is a long shot of Boris Johnson jogging with his dog. Dressed in a beanie hat, woollen jumper, shorts, and trainers – it is not a statesmanlike image of the Prime Minister.
- The photograph is anchored with the caption explaining what the prime minister is doing, the name of his dog "Dilyn", and where he was in the photograph, "St James's Park". The fact that he looks so unsportsmanlike implies Johnson's ineptitude. The fish shorts and the black leather effect trainers are not what we would expect to see a jogger wearing, let alone the Prime Minister, and the whole effect is quite clownish. This would align with the left-wing,

anti-Johnson beliefs of *The Guardian*'s target audience.

- The main headline "Cummings accuses PM of lying over No. 10 Party", is short, sharp and to the point. The drama of the terms "accuses" and "lying" points to a political spat between Johnson and his former employee Cummings. The fact that it is the Prime Minister who is the subject of this accusation is significant, as they are meant to uphold the highest values in our society, follow the ministerial code, and crucially abide by the rules they pass in parliament.
- The word "party" serves to reinforce Johnson's clownlike appearance in the image and thematically ties in with the skyline feature about the majority of the readers "miss[ing]" parties, implying the public have been following the rules.
- The theme of Conservative dishonesty continues in the headline "Inquiry launched into Mone over 'VIP Lane' deal", which highlights an investigation into a Conservative peer, who may not have been following The House of Lord's code of conduct. Overall, this constructs a reality of the Conservatives as dishonourable, in-line with the left-wing values of the paper.
- The coverline – "What we miss about working in the office" – refers to the work from home culture that has emerged since the start of the pandemic. The paper creates a collective identity for the audience with the pronoun "we" and suggests that *The Guardian* sees the majority of their readership as office workers.

Codes and conventions of media language:

- The headlines across the front page are focused, factual, and unemotional, which is what we would expect from a broadsheet newspaper.
- The skyline is given over to the G2 supplement, a regular segment in the paper, which when displayed on newsstands may well be the section people see first. This supplement offers a lighter alternative to the hard-hitting news stories of the rest of the newspaper. Investigating the intertextuality of the office pictures and choice of artist for the wine feature reveals more useful

insights on the target audience and how *The Guardian* appeals to their interests and lifestyle.

Possible areas for further investigation:

- **Code and conventions** of newspapers – price, layout, use of cover photographs/ images, house style, bylines.
- **Narrative** – headlines used to tease people to want to read certain stories (could be linked to Roland Barthes' enigma codes).

PART 2: STARTING POINTS – Contexts and representations

Social & Political contexts:

- From 2019-2020, Dominic Cummings served as Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Chief Political Advisor. Forced out of Downing Street at the end of 2020 after an internal power struggle, Cummings publishes a blog, in which he reveals events and activities that took place during his time at No.10 Downing Street.
- The COVID-19 pandemic is a global pandemic. The disease was first identified in December 2019, before the pandemic was declared in March 2020. As of April 2022, it has caused approx. 6 million deaths globally.
- To help prevent the spread of the disease, the UK went into 'lockdown', where legal measures were put into place to prevent social mixing. At the time of the "bring your own booze" party, this included the banning of indoor gatherings of more than two people from different households, and those found breaking this law could be fined.
- At the start of lockdown, many offices and institutions closed and workers were advised to work from home. In January 2022, although some have returned to offices and workplaces, this is often with reduced numbers and working from home continues for many. Preventative measures in hospitals and healthcare settings include the use of PPE – Personal Protective Equipment – such as masks, visors, gloves, and gowns.
- Ukraine borders Russia and is a post-Soviet

democratic republic. The 2019 presidential elections saw the pro-western leader Volodymyr Zelensky come to power; historically, Ukrainian leaders had been pro-Russia. Tensions had long existed in the region, but in December 2021, Russia increased its troop numbers at the Ukrainian Russian border. This move by Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, generated fears of an invasion and Ukraine requested international support.

- *The Guardian* is described as having mainstream left political values. It does not have an affiliation with any political party but does lean towards the left and has a very liberal tradition. It is therefore not surprising that the main photo is unflattering of the right-wing prime minister.

- *The Guardian* is not owned by a group of shareholders like most other newspapers, for whom making a profit is imperative. Therefore, they believe that they can hold true to their core journalistic principles.

Consider the representation of politicians:

- The front cover is carefully constructed to grab the attention of a typical *Guardian* readership. The political stories have been chosen and laid out in such a way as to appeal to the typical readership.
- Though it doesn't explicitly state an opinion in the style of tabloids (e.g. '*The Sun Says...*'), the choice of these main cover stories portrays the Conservatives as amoral and untrustworthy.
- In both the main photograph and two articles, the Conservatives in question (Johnson and Mone) are portrayed as dishonest.
- The main image in particular shows a politician with none of the typical trappings of a prime minister (formal clothing, statesmanlike environment, composure, and confidence) and as a result, it speaks to a lack of authority and questionable capabilities to hold the office of prime minister.
- The decision to use more inclusive language in the Ukraine story, for example "UK", is suggestive of an article and an issue that the editorial team at *The Guardian* supports and

expects its readers to support. Omitting any mention of the Conservative government or defence secretary, who will have had to make that decision, is indicative of the newspaper's political leanings.

Consider the functions and uses of stereotypes:

- In order to communicate the feature quickly, the images of office workers in the skyline display a range of workplace stereotypes for both individuals and events, e.g. the office romance, the geek, the joker. Whilst tabloids use stereotypes frequently in their lead stories, broadsheets tend to reserve their use for entertainment features.

Possible areas for further investigation:

- Theoretical perspectives (e.g. Stuart Hall) – representation, stereotype, selection/omission.
- It would be helpful to compare this cover with another from the tabloid right-wing press, such as *The Sun*, to see the methods used to represent politicians and office workers.

Homework 1:

Annotate the newspaper below in detail. Consider: Target audience, layout, language, image, mise-en-scene, camera angle, political viewpoints and context, ideology, theory, etc. How has it been constructed to appeal to audiences?

Date Due:



Homework 2:

Prepare to answer the following questions for a review quiz in lesson:

Date Due:

1. Name 5 elements of mise-en-scene.
2. Name 3 differences between tabloids and broadsheets.
3. What is the difference between left-wing and right-wing?
4. What is the difference between hard news and soft news?
5. Name any 4 camera angles and any 2 (or more) media theories.
6. What is propaganda?
7. Name 5 newspaper conventions.
8. Name 3 news sources.
9. What is sensationalism?
10. Name 3 other language techniques used in newspaper headlines.

Homework 3:

Annotate the set product newspaper below in detail. Consider: Target audience, layout, language, image, mise-en-scene, camera angle, political viewpoints and context, ideology, theory, etc. How has it been constructed to appeal to audiences?

Date Due:

