

## Magazine Mastheads

An interactive activity which introduces students to some of the more well-known mastheads from music magazines. Some words are in bold to draw the students' attention and they can begin compiling a list of media terminology.

Students have to match up the mastheads with their meanings, they do this by dragging and dropping the boxes around the screen.

When complete, there is a question about the colour scheme of the mastheads.

Responses the students may come up with are:

- Connotations of red – warning, danger, love, power, strength, masculine
- They may say red is a powerful colour suggesting dominance or importance
- They may suggest that the red and white are highly contrasting so allow the masthead to stand out on newsstands.

## Magazine Front Covers

Labelling activities will help the students familiarise themselves with the terminology used to talk about magazines. This task will also encourage them to begin to understand what the code and conventions are of the genre.

This is how the students should have annotated the Q cover



This is how the students should have annotated the Kerrang! cover



## Similarities and Differences

This activity allows the students to begin to understand what the codes and conventions are of the genre, by looking to see what is similar regardless of target audience.

Responses the students may have come up with, but these are not exhaustive lists.

Similarities	Differences
They both have eye-catching mastheads.	Kerrang! is a much busier looking front cover compared with Q.
They both use one central dominant image which ties into the main cover story/splash.	Kerrang!'s masthead is hidden behind the cover stars whereas Q's isn't.
They both have a range of cover stories, covering a range of different artists to engage different members of the audience.	Kerrang! uses more slang in its mode of address – 'kick-ass' and 'emo'.
They both have a consistent house style, colour scheme and brand identity.	Q has a much glossier feel to it. The pages are made from higher quality paper.
They both have a strip running along the bottom with extra items on.	Q has a strapline but Kerrang! doesn't.
They both have a date, barcode and web address.	

The similarities should begin to form the basis for a codes and conventions list.

## Music Magazine Websites

Screenshots have been taken from both the Q and the Kerrang! websites (11th March 2017) Students are encouraged to see them as a means of promotion and explore how the different segments of each website are actively targeting audiences and promoting their print magazine, digital content or brand.

This activity only looks at the landing page for each website. As an extension task, you might ask students to go onto the two websites and analyse other pages in the same way.

### Similarities and Differences

In a similar way as they did with the magazines, this activity allows the students to begin to understand what the codes and conventions are of the genre, by looking to see what is similar regardless of target audience.

Responses the students may have come up with, but these are not exhaustive lists.

Similarities	Differences
They both provide obvious links to their social media pages.	Kerrang! has a lot more advertisements.
They both offer a sneak-peek at the most recent issue and its contents.	Kerrang! has a more obvious brand shown through all the platforms available to audiences such as TV and radio.
They both provide several easy ways to buy a print or a digital subscription.	Kerrang! has a header strip which remains at the top even when users scroll down the page.
They both provide a link to buy tickets from the brand's own ticket site.	There is a lot more white space on Q's website, Kerrang! is much busier looking.
They both have a navigation bar along the top to help direct users around the site.	

The similarities should begin to form the basis for a codes and conventions list.

### Longer Writing Task

Students are given a sample question and asked to respond to it in essay form.

*Explain why websites are important to the music magazine industry. Refer to the Q magazine website and the Kerrang! magazine website.*

*Areas the students may cover are:*

- The importance of technology, including reference to convergence and synergy with other media such as Kerrang! TV, radio and gigs.*
- The importance of online media as a way of marketing and distributing to global audiences and large mainstream audiences.*



- *The importance of links to participatory media such as social networks in reaching specific audiences, especially younger audiences.*
- *The profitable nature of online identities, including links to online stores to purchase merchandise, subscriptions and digital content.*
- *The development of an identity and branding created through aspects such as typography, colour, animation and user interface, replicated in other media texts such as magazines and gig posters.*

## Kerrang!

- Kerrang!'s header strip which remains static at the top even when users scroll down the page, clearly present to establish their brand and links to social media.
- The large amounts of advertisements show where Kerrang! gets much of its revenue from. To encourage advertisers, they need to drive traffic to the webpage so there is a 'busy' feel to the website. This gives users a feeling of value for money and by updating it regularly they will ensure users come back frequently, therefore advertisers will keep advertising there.
- Interactive website, many links to open in new windows, competitions to involve fans, links to social media, videos to watch.

## Q

- Instead of large amounts of advertisement, Q magazine has sponsored content tucked away at the bottom of the page, showing where some of its revenue comes from.
- There is a much heavier focus on the current print magazine issue, with this preview taking up around  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the web page and digital subscriptions. This emphasis shows how their magazine sales are their most important thing as they don't have as many brand tie-ins as Kerrang! so they must constantly work on driving up magazine sales.

## Representation

These activities encourage students to think about stereotyping and how rap and hip-hop has a lot of assumptions made about it.

Students are asked to comment on what comes to mind when they think about:

Hip-hop

Rap Music

Grime

Dizzee Rascal

Typical responses may include:

Rap music, black people, talking over music/MCing, sampling, sexist/misogynistic lyrics, lyrics about wealth and material goods, gold jewellery/bling, UK success.

Students may or may not know who Dizzee Rascal is and so it may help to introduce him either by website research or by playing some of his music/videos (check content first though as some is inappropriate). They may know a few of his more recent songs. These are just singles and albums that were released, there are more that are album tracks that students may know.

Boy in da Corner	Showtime	Maths + English	Tongue n' Cheek	The Fifth
I Luv U	Stand Up Tall	Sirens	Dance wiv Me	Goin' Crazy
Fix Up, Look Sharp	Dream	Flex	Bonkers	Something Really Bad
Jus' a Rascal	Off 2 Work/Graftin'		Holiday	Love This Town
			Dirtee Cash	
			Dirtee Disco	

When discussing connotations and typicality of the genre, they may pick up on the following:

- Emphasis on earning money/ wealth and spending it - Off 2 Work/Graftin', Dirtee Cash, Holiday
- Use of slang/colloquialisms - I Luv U, Jus' a Rascal, Graftin', Dance wiv Me, Goin' Crazy
- Link to dancing - Dance wiv Me, Dirtee Disco

## Two truths and a lie

Students need to read and decide what they think is true and what they think is a lie, based on their knowledge and what they expect of a UK rapper. The answers are below:

- True - In August 2003, Dizzee Rascal was stabbed six-times in Ayia Napa.
- True - In September, Dizzee Rascal was awarded the Mercury Prize for the best album of 2003.
- True - Dizzee Rascal was the youngest person to receive the Mercury Prize for best album
- True - In 2008 Dizzee Rascal recorded a song for the suicide charity CALM about a friend who took his own life.
- False - In 2010, Dizzee Rascal stated he was no longer going to drink or take drugs. He still adheres to clean living today. He couldn't maintain clean living and is back to partying.
- False - In February 2008, Dizzee Rascal's sister died in a high-speed crash on the M1. It wasn't his sister it was his girlfriend, *Kaya Bousquet*.

This activity should bring up a discussion about behaviour typically associated with rap stars, stabbings, drink/drugs, death of an associate.

## Image Analysis

Students are asked to look at an image of Dizzee Rascal from 2003, the year of his debut and consider how he appears to support the stereotype of a rap/hip hop artist?

The clues, should they need them, ask the students to consider: his clothing; body language and pose; age and ethnicity; setting and background.

Some responses the students may come up with:

- Sportswear suggest a relaxed, casual attitude/youth culture
- Giving the finger also suggests a couldn't-care-less attitude and his lack of a smile suggests he is serious about it too.

- Young black male, typical of the genre.
- Inner city, deprived area suggests his background/roots – many lyrics in rap are about working their way up to wealth and happiness from troubled childhoods or poor backgrounds.

## Media Language & Audience in Kerrang! Magazine

Students should be building their textual analysis skills and being able to identify audiences that are being targeted by texts.

The first activity asks them to consider the Contents page of Kerrang! and identify two different audiences. Encourage them to give reasons for their choices based on the text in front of them.

They may suggest: people who enjoy rock music, young people or males.

The next activity pushes them to start really analysing the page and thinking how the magazine is targeting specific audiences, considering: images, language, layout and design.

Responses they may come up with:

- Males - Dominance of male images; Sci-Fi/futuristic theme; blue colour scheme; Note from a male Editor.
- Young people – Several pages of posters; humorous language; many contemporary rock artists more familiar to a younger audience;
- People who enjoy rock music – Huge range of artists on offer throughout the magazine; dominant image of rock band of the moment 'Mallory Knox'; details of upcoming Gigs; article on iconic rock stars such as Nirvana.

### Advert v Editorial

This activity gets students thinking about how magazines target them as consumers and how it is not only adverts that are used to persuade us to part with our cash.

First they have to decide what they think is an advert and what isn't. The next slide explains why one of the pages, which isn't an advert in the strictest sense, is still a way of advertising products to consumers.

Students then have to analyse the products page in more detail. They are encouraged to consider how the page has been created to appeal to Kerrang!'s target audience. Responses they may come up with are:



Title of the page is similar to the magazine's masthead so readers are reminded of the branding and its significance.

Rock fans - Many of the products are band related; Mode of address: "All the best gear from the four corners of Planet Rock and beyond"; dark colouring of the items links to the genre;

Younger audiences - Reference to Harry Potter and Batman; images around the title (skateboard, sock, Converse boot) arguably are familiar and are supposed to represent a younger person's bedroom floor; Photo frame product, making a political joke of Trump alongside two other 'villains'.

They may also decide that other audiences are being targeted:

Older readers through reference to Princess Leia, the price of some of the items (£600+) suggesting a certain level of income

and therefore age and/or success; The use of a \$ and a £ in the title 'Mu\$t Hav£s' also suggest that these products require a certain level of disposable income.

## Applying Audience Theory to Q Magazine

One of the main theoretical perspectives that students must know is Blumler and Kat's 'Uses and Gratifications Theory'. Make sure students know the four main strands:

### Identity

Seeing the person as someone to identify with, a role model, someone with similar values as your own or someone to aspire to be like.

### Education

A way to acquire more information about a topic, a way to seek knowledge or understand something more.

### Entertainment

Media to be enjoyed, maybe as escapism, allowing you to forget about your worries or the mundanity of your own life for a short time.

### Interaction

Providing a source of conversation between people, allowing people to socialise whilst discussing a media text.

## Magazine Front Cover – Uses and Gratification model

When considering Q magazine's front cover, students may suggest that audiences **identify** with the dominant image of The Strokes, aspiring to be like them/one of them perhaps.

They may seek **education** through the 'Rock against Trump, a five-point plan' wanting to know how they can use music as a political tool.



The whole of the magazine may be read purely for **entertainment** purposes, to give them some light relief from their lives

They may use one or more of the stories as a way of **interacting** with others, perhaps by using it as a discussion point with friends/family/colleagues.

Students must understand that people's age, gender and social/cultural understanding and backgrounds will influence how they use this text. For example, they may be a Trump supporter and so the cover line 'Rock against Trump, a five-point plan' may be something that stops them from buying this issue. As another example, younger audiences may not know who Kate Bush is and what her significance is to rock music.

## Website Landing Page – Uses and Gratification model

When considering Q magazine's website, students may suggest that audiences **identify** with the image of The 1975s, aspiring to be like them/one of them perhaps.

They may seek **education** through the reviews puff, wanting to know who has a single out and how good it is deemed by Q's reviews.

The video of the Q Awards may be watched for **entertainment** purposes, to give them some light relief and to allow them to find out who won what.

They may use any one or more of the stories as a way of **interacting** with others, perhaps by using it as a discussion point with friends/family/colleagues.

Students must understand that people's age, gender and social/cultural understanding and backgrounds will influence how they use this text. For example, older people may not be able to access the social media links if they don't have a Facebook/Twitter account of their own.

## Dizzee Rascal Audience





Students were asked to identify one audience for this article.

They may have said:

- Dizzee Rascal fans, Wiley fans, Rap/Hip-Hop fans, aspiring rappers, black people, young people.

They were then asked to explain two ways in which this article is aimed at the audience they identified.

They may have suggested:

- Star image used to entice fans to read the article (Dizzee/Wiley) so they can learn more about them.
- Fans of the genre of music or aspiring artists are being targeted by the sharing of an early album which is being referred to as 'The Bible' by Wiley and suggesting that nothing Dizzee has done since matches it. This may encourage fans to buy the album in order to appreciate the artist's earlier work and possibly learn from it.
- Young/Black people may appreciate reading about a successful young/black artist who is supported by another successful black artist. This is a positive post which suggests that anyone can make it big if they try.

## Kerrang! Industry Research

Students need to learn about music industry. They need to consider areas such as: ownership, funding, regulation, production, distribution and the impact of technology.

This activity only scrapes the surface on this but makes a good starting point, which can be set as a homework task or given to students to do in class. They will need access to the internet and part of it is about learning how to find and filter information.

There is an answer sheet provided for teachers or for self-marking.