NEWSPAPERS A LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES Cheat Sheet

by Suzie C Dixon (suzie22dixon) via cheatography.com/212965/cs/46381/

NEWSPAPERS introduction

Conventions: Elements of a text that follow 'rules' of design/information. Repetitive across multiple texts within one media form.

ASPECTS OF A NEWSPAPERS

- **Masthead:** newspaper's name , easiest way to identify a newspaper.
- **Slogan/Tagline:** 'catchphrase', sums up the newspaper's philosophy or unique selling point
- **Headlines:** largest typeface on the page, the most important stories.
- **Central/Main Image:** usually a dramatic picture, fills most of the cover, text or caption usually close by to offer context.
- **Strapline:** above/below headline, smaller typeface, further explanation of story
- **Stand first:** block of text that introduces the story and offers initial content
- **By line:** journalist's name & details
- **Standalone:** picture story used on the cover, to offer visual engagement
- **Pull Quotes:** interesting quotes from the article, extracted and written in larger font to make it stand out
- **News in brief (NIB) / side bars:** smaller facts or articles, a list / column positioned at the side or bottom of the paper
- **Jumpline:** follows headline on the front page encouraging readers to read on and hopefully buy the paper.
- **Plugs and Puffs:** adverts (plugs) and offers/giveaways (puffs) on the cover which will appeal to the audience
- **White space:** area with no text, image or advert

NEWSPAPERS introduction (cont)

- **Margins and gutters:** lines to prevent text overlapping
- **Frames:** shapes outlining the parts of text, to make them visually separate
- **Columns:** conventional layout for main story text on covers
- **Serif font:** small decorative elements to each letter, traditional/historical looking
- **Sans serif font:** plain font, no decorative elements, more modern look

TABLOID

'Popular press'

Aimed at lower social groupings (C2,D & E)

Bold layout

Colour on the masthead, bold large typeface, large and dramatic images

Shorter articles

Headline often a pun or a joke

'Stories of human interest' – e.g. gossip stories to do with celebrities

Gimmicks, e.g. bingo games, free travel tickets etc

BROADSHEET

Considered 'serious' or ' 'high-quality' press

Aimed at higher social groupings (A,B,C1)

Plainer layout

Limited colour on front page, smaller typeface, smaller, subtle images

Longer articles - more detailed

Headlines more serious and focus on 'shocking' rather than sensationalising

Focus on international news and politics

NEWSPAPERS introduction (cont)

May include free magazines etc. - but usually of an educational nature.

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

Semiotics = the study of signs, derived from Roland Barthes

With semiotics think about the meaning encoded by the producer…

… and decoded by the audience

As well as connoted meanings

NEWSPAPERS - media language

Sensationalism: A policy held by some newspaper editors, news stories are selected and worded to excite the audience, can encourage bias – emotive language leads the audience towards a preferred interpretation

Political bias: To think about bias, consider the political outlook of different papers - split these into broadly left and broadly right wing. Labour is a historically left-wing party; Conservative is right-wing

GALTUNG AND RUGE - news values

analysed the news to find the criteria that make a story newsworthy

News values can help understand why and how papers choose the stories that run most prominently

The values:

1. Proximity - The story should be geographically and culturally close to the target audience

2. Threshold - Is it a big event that will have an impact on a large number of people?

3. Predictability - Did we expect this event to happen? Unexpected events are more interesting for audiences

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Published 18th May, 2025.
Last updated 18th May, 2025.

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NEWSPAPERS - media language (cont)

4. Personalisation - Readers respond to news stories about people who are similar to them

5. Oddity - Is there anything unusual about this story that makes it stand out?

Although the basic principles of news values are universal…

… different papers value different kinds of stories

NEWSPAPERS - industry

REGULATION

Citizen vs consumer

Citizen Behaviour : Participating actively in society, to build a 'better' one. Caring about ethics and ethical standards. Moral agents – caring about their choices and their impact on others.

Consumer Behaviour: Buying goods or services for own use. Driven by personal gratification. Choosing what is best for ourselves and not worrying about effects on others.

LIVINGSTONE AND LUNT - regulation theory

There is an underlying struggle in UK regulation between citizen and consumer

Citizens need to be protected from harmful material And regulators need to prevent unethical behaviour by media producers

Consumers need to have choice, value for money and market competition

IPSO – Independent Press Standards Organisation

This is the regulatory body for both The Mirror and The Times

Stories about celebrities' private lives *for example*

Consumers might be interested in these

NEWSPAPERS - industry (cont)

But if the IPSO found that the celebrities were; *harassed or reported inaccurately*

They would intervene

These rules protect the values of the citizen

BUT...

... There can be exceptions to the Editor's Code if a story is felt to be in the 'public interest'

This might include;

- Exposing crime or unethical behaviour

- Protecting public health or safety

Prior to IPSO there was the Press Complaints Commission

They were heavily criticised after the phone hacking scandal (see wikipedia link on Classroom) and replaced by the IPSO

However some people think the IPSO isn't independent enough

It is funded by the media companies it regulates

ECONOMIC CONTEXTS

Not about the economy in general

Anything to do with money in the industry

How media products are funded

The finances of producing and distributing media texts

ORGANISATION

The company that produces a text

'Organisation' might be used instead of 'company' because public service broadc-asters like the BBC aren't run like most companies

So not the individuals that make a text, but the larger organisation they're part of

CODE

NEWSPAPERS - industry (cont)

Something which communicates meaning, e.g., colours, sounds.

The meaning of codes changes according to the context, e.g., the colour red can mean passion, love, danger or speed depending on how and where it is used.

Connotations

CONVENTIONS

What the audience expects to see in a particular media text, for example the conventions of science fiction films may include: aliens, scientists, other worlds, gadgets, representations of good and evil, etc.

Characters, setting, iconography, narrative, technical codes and representation.

DIGITAL CONVERGENCE

The coming together of previously separate media industries and/or platforms

The mobile phone, for example, allows the user to download and listen to music, view videos, tweet artists etc. All this can be done through one portable device.

DISTRIBUTION

The methods by which media products are delivered to audiences, including the marketing campaign.

a newer term **: CHURNALISM...**

Stories that can be published with minimal effort and research

Stories often pulled from social media

No long-running investigative journalism that takes time and money – just quickly generated 'content'

Cheap, copyright-free video and images

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NEWSPAPERS - industry (cont)

PRINT SALES

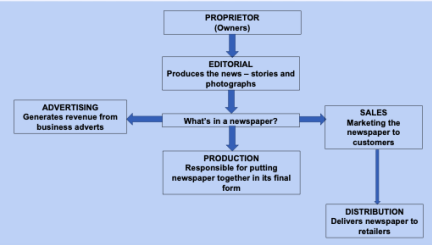
Newspaper print sales in decline since early-2000s

Pressure on companies to cut costs

Websites: increasingly important

Apps – customers pay to use, but production costs are lower

What's in a newspaper?



mirror SE



THE DAILY MIRROR INDUSTRY

Daily Mirror formerly owned by Trinity Mirror

Largest newspaper publisher in UK

In 2018 they bought The Express and The Star

Re-named and become Reach

This merging of titles means Reach can…

Pool editorial resources

Pool staff, locations and resources

the mirror set edition

"ZERO SHAME"

"1 WAS IN HIS OWN FLAT"

"300 PICTURES HANDED OVER... **AND STILL**"

"IM NOT GOING" - written as though it is a direct quote from Johnson and suggesting he is dodging responsibility

'and still' - all the evidence, why has he not gotten in trouble? why do people support what he did? why do people deny what he did?

Photo: with the text, could be seen as smirking, no remorse or guilt

DOUBE PAGE SPREAD: photo of johnson and a photo of NHS workers risking their lives - BINARY OPPOSITES

The Daily Mirror has always had a left-wing political stance

And supported the Labour party

The dominant hegemonic position (or preferred reading) would be… Boris Johnson is not fit to lead the country, having broken lockdown rules that the rest of the country stuck to

The negotiated reading: This doesn't mean he should resign Because we need strong leadership to face other challenges and there is no reliable alternative to replace him **OR** Boris Johnson may have broken lockdown rules, which was wrong… The seriousness of the issue has been exagge-rated in the media

the mirror set edition (cont)

The oppositional reading: See the message that Boris Johnson is not fit to lead the country, having broken lockdown rules that the rest of the country stuck to… **BUT** These breaches are not important and don't make me question his leadership, he has admitted he has made a mistake and suggested what he can do to make things better

AUDIENCE PROFILE

Data shows that the average Mirror reader is; Over 35

C2DE on social grade scale – working class

Might have only the compulsory level of education – e.g. working class readers are less likely to have gone to university

Left-wing political views

This has long been The Mirror's political position

Supporters of the Labour party

FRONT COVER

As with the photo on the Times cover: taken on his way to the Commons to make his statement

We may interpret Johnson's expression as unconcerned

This clearly encouraged by the text (see quotes above)

What makes this typical as a tabloid?" + *media language*

Large image, occupying most of the page

Minimal text

Bold, impactful headlines

Easy to understand – the overall 'message' of the piece is efficiently communicated

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the mirror set edition (cont)

Appropriate for readers who may be less educated – less willing or able to read large amounts of text

Emotive language – "shame"

Sometimes used to send the message that Boris Johnson is a "baddie"

"Brashly"; "snubbed" – suggest rudeness

Sans Serif font – modern, informal

DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD

The images are juxtaposed

On one side NHS workers fight to save someone with COVID

Remember the huge public support for the NHS during the pandemic

Contrasted with Boris Johnson sipping champagne

This might suggest…

- NHS and other key workers were risking their lives to save others, whilst Johnson relaxed

- Johnson is detached from the reality of Covid, in the comfort of Downing St. with luxury goods!

- Or even suggesting a causal link – some suggested that Downing St. breaking the rules led to others doing the same, and so Covid spreading

All of the quotes from the public are very critical of Johnson

Many say he should resign

These stories are often emotive and cite personal tragedies and traumas

They are also the words of ordinary people – not politicians

The paper frames itself as standing up for the British public

the mirror set edition (cont)

In the Mirror's masthead it brands itself, "the heart of Britain"

BINARY OPPOSITES - Levi Strauss

The Mirror's coverage of the Partygate scandal revolves around a binary opposition

Boris Johnson vs The British Public

"DEAR MIRROR READERS" (Starmer's letter): This is a powerful opposition as it places the reader in opposition to Johnson

- In Keir Starmer's letter he uses collective language such as "we" and "us"

The Daily Mirror has always had a left-wing political stance

And supported the Labour party

Labour leader Keir Starmer features prominently on the front page

Implied praise for his response to Johnson – described as "crushing"

Not only criticising the PM, but promoting an alternative political leader

Starmer's words are echoed in the Mirror's own headline

"He is a man without shame"

Starmer also claims to speak for the public, just like The Mirror

Starmer is given a direct platform in the double page spread

Again associations between Labour and "the British people"

Daily Mirror's approach repeatedly echoes Starmer's

The Times was more balanced on this issue: A pragmatic approach designed to avoid alienating readers

the mirror set edition (cont)

However The Mirror is forceful and unambiguous in its negative representation of Johnson

This is unlikely to alienate any readers BECAUSE Readers are likely to support Labour already, as this is the paper's ideology

So they are unlikely to sympathise with a Conservative leader

THE MIRROR ADDITIONAL PAGES

The Mirror did not choose the Commons controversy story as their main story

ARTICLE: £61M LOTTERY WIN COUPLE THOUGHT PRIZE WAS £2.60

emphasise the oddity elements of the story

repeat the story about thinking they'd won £2.61 and buying a bacon sandwich

emphasise the ordinary lives of the winners

this makes the story relatable to the mirrors audience

MAIN STORY, COVER AND DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD DEDICATED TO IT

References the show Only Fools and Horses that is about working class life - mirror audience likely to know the show or enjoy it, making the article even more relatable or entertaining

- **"this time next year we'll be millionaires"**

- **" we were going mental in our car, punching the air... it was like the Del & Rodney scene"** - and has an image of Del and Rodney

NEWS VALUES this fulfils

1. oddity - thinking they only won a small amount at first

2. personalisation - only fools and horses references, emphasis on the ordinariness of their lives

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THE MIRROR ADDITIONAL PAGES (cont)

3. predictability - yes and no. someone WILL win the lottery, but to the people that win it is UNPREDICTABLE

4. threshold - no

5. Proximity - ish. again, references the 'ordinariness' of the couples lives: culturally relevant. Geography not so relevant here

times SE



THE TIMES SET EDITION

1st February 2022

Civil servant Sue Gray was asked to write a report on alleged illegal parties in Downing Street during a Covid lockdown in 2020

An update on the report's progress was released on 31st January 2022

Boris Johnson apologised, but refused to resign (PARTYGATE)

Downing Street handed over 300 photos to the police

63% felt Johnson should resign

So public opinion was mostly against Johnson, but there was still a split

onservative voters were more divided on this issue than the wider public

THE TIMES SET EDITION (cont)

- large main image: Johnson. photo makes him look shameful or guilty. the times is more **right wing** so probably trying to represent him as accepting his mistake and not doing it again, making him look guilty might provoke sympathy from Johnsons supporters

- lots of text

- supplement plug: How to be fit? - do the bare minimum

- title: police investigate PM's four lockdown parties doesn't instantly show the paper taking a side unless look into it in more detail. the title itself sounds more neutral

POSITIVE REPRESENTATION OF JOHNSON

He is slightly smiling

This could be interpreted as a forced smile

Perhaps expressing nerves and trepidation at having to address the Commons

His body language is slightly submissive – not standing up straight

Perhaps suggesting he feels a sense of shame

The caption text below the images says, "he promised change"

Together with the photo, this might suggest…

He is acknowledging his mistakes and taking responsibility

He is going to make sure this never happens again

Times readers who supported Johnson might interpret the front page as above

Negative representation of Johnson

He is slightly smiling

This could be interpreted as Johnson not taking the situation seriously

THE TIMES SET EDITION (cont)

Not taking politics seriously was a common criticism during his time as PM

The evidence from the Sue Gray report is damning

Some readers might see a disconnect between the seriousness of his mistakes, and his smile

The caption text say Johnson has "rejected repeated calls to quit"

The subheadings note that Sue Gray specifically criticised leadership

Some readers might see this as him not taking responsibility

"Police investigate PM's four lockdown parties"

- Emphasising this happened repeatedly – not a one-off

"Detectives examine hundreds of photos"

- The amount of evidence suggests lots of parties took place

- And reminds us the police is involved – the Prime Minister is connected to a criminal investigation

"Gray criticises lack of leadership and drinking culture"

-"Culture" describes things that happen habitually

Times readers who are against Johnson and want him to resign might interpret the front page as above

Subtly negative messages about Boris Johnson are encoded into the front page

However there is arguably a more positive message also encoded here

Audiences are likely to decode these messages based on their own views on this story

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THE TIMES SET EDITION (cont)

How does the times target its audience? and what makes it typical of a quality newspaper?

Relatively large, bold picture

But still lots of text, some of it very small

Informative and in-depth reporting

Addressing and educated audience with good literacy

Formal mode of address – so no slang etc. used

Serif font - traditional

SUPPLEMENT PLUG

Both the 'How to be fit? Do the bare minimum' and 'I was bitten by a pandemic puppy' headlines make use of enigma

Readers might want to know more about how 'doing the bare minimum' can keep us fit

Without reading the article, this seems contradictory or counterintuitive but also, quite appealing

The tone of the puppy piece is unclear from just the headline – will this be a serious or humorous piece?

The inclusion of the banner tells us The Times offers both 'hard' and 'soft' news content

These might fulfil different wants and needs for the same reader

... Or mean that different readers within a household might read different sections of the paper

THE TIMES ADDITIONAL PAGES

ARTICLE: RESPECT THE MENOPAUSE OR BE SUED, FIRMS TOLD

Which news values does this fulfil?

THE TIMES ADDITIONAL PAGES (cont)

- **Threshold:** This is an issue that affects a huge number of people, and also important for people who will go through menopause later in life. May be seen as an even more important issue as historically menopause has not always been talked about openly - **"It is estimated that about 13 million women in the UK are going through or have been through the menopause"**

- **Personalisation:** Those experiencing menopause, or know someone who is, might be glad for this coverage

**Why would this article appeal to the Times' audience

average Times reader is over 35

article says menopause usually affects women "between the ages of 45 and 55"

substantial number of Times readers will be in this age group

Audience research also suggests the Times' audience is fairly evenly split in terms of gender

not only women (and not only women in this age group) are interested in menopause – but they are most likely to be directly affected

Why might the Times use Mariella Frostrup as a source?

She is the Chairwoman of the campaign group Menopause Mandate

So knows what she's talking about

As a quality newspaper, the Times wants to offer its audiences reliable information

However the article also notes she is a Times Radio presenter

THE TIMES ADDITIONAL PAGES (cont)

So this also allows the Times to plug its radio station in the article - synergy

ARTICLE: £61M LOTTERY WIN COUPLE THOUGHT PRIZE WAS £2.60

emphasise the oddity elements of the story

repeat the story about thinking they'd won £2.61 and buying a bacon sandwich

emphasise the ordinary lives of the winners

The Times' readers are more affluent than the Mirror's, but few are multimillionaires

So this makes the story relatable

This is a very minor story in the Times

This might reflect the Times' commitment to more serious and informative news coverage

No reference to Only Fools and Horses (it does in the Mirror)

Perhaps less relatable to the Times audience than the Mirror's

ARTICLE: HOW WE STRUGGLED TO LIVE ON LESS THAN £60K A YEAR

The average wage in the UK in 2023 was around £34,000

So a couple living on a combined income of £60,000 are below average

However there are still middle class, in the top half of the social grade scale

The article reflects the problems of people who are not desperately poor, but don't have enough money to live comfortably without worrying

The cost of living has increased dramatically in the past few years

Many ABC1 Times readers will recognise some of what the writer says

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Last updated 18th May, 2025.

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THE TIMES ADDITIONAL PAGES (cont)

The concerns listed are very middle class: Paying for university fees, Paying for the weekly Ocado shop (one of the most expensive supermarkets)

Why would the mirror be unlikely to publish this?

£34K was the average wage in the UK in 2023

Many jobs pay less – including hospitality, care roles

C2DE Mirror readers are more likely to be in this position

The Mirror as been running a campaign called Cost of Living: We're Here to Help with advice and support

This is focused on the basics – paying for food, rent and utilities

What challenges does the Times face in the newspaper industry?

Like all newspapers, print circulation is falling

They don't release these figures, so we don't know how much they've fallen – but they definitely have

**TO OVERCOME these challenges...*

Introduced a paywall on their website

This has been very successful

Profits were £44m in 2021, rising to £80m last year.

Subscriptions (both print and digital) are going up

This covers set costs

Every subscription after set costs are covered creates profit

They also combined their printing press with DMGT (publishers of Daily Mail)

THE TIMES ADDITIONAL PAGES (cont)

This is to increase efficiency and reduce costs for the print paper

Why is the Times website popular with audiences?

Premium experience

No disruptive adverts, clean design

Quality of journalism is the same online as in the paper

Unlike The Mirror, whose website is crammed with 'churnalism'

Regularly updated live news

Offering coverage the print edition can't

Offers interactive features such as comments

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