

Unit 1 Media: Representations of Gender in Movie Posters

Name:

	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Criterion 1: Describe representations in media texts.	Very detailed and sophisticated description of the representations, focusing on codes and conventions and the meaning they create. <input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed and sophisticated description of the representations, focusing on codes and conventions and the meaning they create. <input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed description of the representation, with some reference to the codes and conventions in the representation and the meanings they create. <input type="checkbox"/>	Brief description of the representation. Limited understanding of appropriate codes and conventions. <input type="checkbox"/>	Limited description of the representation without reference to appropriate codes and conventions. <input type="checkbox"/>
Criterion 2: Compare the construction of different representations in media texts and across media forms.	A sophisticated comparison of the representations focusing on their different use of codes and conventions. <input type="checkbox"/>	Very detailed comparison of the representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	A comparison of representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	Basic comparison of representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	Little comparison of representations. <input type="checkbox"/>
Criterion 3: Analyse representations within the context of institutional practices, media history and cultural values.	Sophisticated discussion of how cultural values shape media representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed discussion of how cultural values shape media representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	An identification of cultural values and how they shape the representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	Identification of the link between cultural values and representations. <input type="checkbox"/>	Limited understanding of cultural values and how they shape representations. <input type="checkbox"/>

Total:

Grade:

Comment:

Unit 1 Media: Representations of Gender in Movie Posters

Suggestions for improvement:

- Plan out your response before you start writing. You should think about how the subject is represented, identifying important codes that convey meaning. Individual signs have two levels of meaning—denotative and connotative. When you see an image of a gun, for example, it's just a picture of a weapon. On a connotative level, however, we associate particular ideas with that gun—violence, aggression, anger, control. When you are writing about representations, the connotations of a particular sign become very important. Colours are a prime example. Black, for example, is a sombre colour that is often associated with funerals and death. White, on the other hand, connotes purity and innocence. You understand what signs mean, it's just a matter of identifying them and explaining what they connote. Some good synonyms for the word connote: signifies, conveys, implies, symbolises, represents. You might write, for example: 'The colour of Angelina Jolie's dress in this representation is important, contributing to the overall representation of her as strong and independent. The colour black, in this context, conveys strength, elegance and sophistication. It has very different connotations to the colour pink which was often used in earlier representations of women, such as the poster for *The Wolfman*.'
- Describe representations using clear language. Do not use words or terminology that you are unfamiliar with.
- Ensure you use the language of representation—including the words representation, construction, codes, conventions and values.
- Remember that codes can be symbolic and technical. A gun, for example, is a symbolic code that conveys power and aggression. A high angle, on the other hand, is a technical code which conveys helplessness or insignificance.
- Be specific about the use of a particular code and how the viewer reads that code. 'In this representation, the colour of Angelina Jolie's dress is significant. The colour black connotes power, authority and sophistication. This is a marked difference to earlier representations, such as the poster for *The Wolf Man* in which the heroine is wearing a pink dress, a colour traditionally associated with femininity.'
- Deconstruct representations. Your job when you're describing a representation is to break it down and explain how that meaning has been created. For example: "The poster for *The Wolf Man* (1941) represents the female character as helpless and incapable of defending herself. The female character is positioned in the bottom third of the poster, sprawled helplessly across the ground, her posture and facial expression contribute to this representation. Her eyes are closed and her expression blank as if she has fainted in the presence of the werewolf. The colour and style of her dress – elaborate, ruffled and pink – contributes to a sense of femininity."
- In this case, because you're looking at representations of gender, don't focus on aspects of the representation that don't directly address this. Keep your discussion relevant.
- When necessary, explain how values might have influenced the construction of a representation, e.g. "In the early half of the twentieth century, before the feminist movement of the 1970s, movie posters generally represented women as far more powerless than men."
- If you are word processing an assignment, the title of films should be italicised, e.g. *The Revenge of the Creature*. The first word and all important words in the title must be capitalised. If you are writing the title of a film or book in an exam situation, instead of italicising the title, put the name into single quotation marks, e.g. 'The Revenge of the Creature'.
- Always refer to people by their surnames, e.g. 'In this representation Jolie and Pitt are almost symmetrical which conveys a sense of equality.'
- Do not write in a personal manner. This is an analysis. You should avoid terminology like 'I think' or 'we see that'.
- Don't include irrelevant detail, e.g. 'this tells you a little but about what the storyline should be about.'

Want to get a high score on the exam? Follow this advice for further study, enrichment and exam preparation...

- Brush up on your understanding of representation here: <http://lessonbucket.com/vce-media/unit-1/representation/representation-2/>
- Think about how you can improve your ability to describe print representations here: <http://lessonbucket.com/representation/representations-of-gender-in-movie-posters/>
- Re-read *Heinemann Media* pp.1-13, pp.21-23 taking notes about representation.