**Travis Mackenzie** - Hello, my name's Travis Mackenzie. And today, I'm going to be taking you through the Study specifications of the new VCE Media Study Design. So, this is the content we're going to be covering and I'm just going to get straight into it. Our first point is media literacy. And Media literacy is the interrelated set of competencies that help our students maximise advantages and minimise harm in the new information digital world that they live in. If you want to unpack what that means even more, you can have a look at the UNESCO Five Laws of Media and Information Literacy. And it's really about empowering our students to decode the media landscape and it really does underpin everything that we study.

So, Media products, forms, and technologies, these are the different categories, I guess, of classifications when we talk about Media production. So, Media products, of course, are just the consumable output that's created by a media producer, and these are distributed to audiences who engage with them, consume and read them. We'll talk a bit more about audience later. And the important point here is that we often refer to a Media product as a media text and that's because we can read a Media text in the same way that we read a book or a written article. And so, if you come across that term text, it really is synonymous in a lot of ways with Media products, but there are some products that aren't texts. You could, for instance, refer to a Media product as a social networking side or something like that. That's harder to say it's a text.

So, the important thing here though is that as an audience, we can read these Media products and understand them. And to do that, we have to understand first what the form of that Media product is. So that's the categorization of a Media product based on the specific technology that is used to make and distribute them. Media technologies, of course, are the analogue and digital tools that we use to make any Media product and that's, of course, things like cameras, but also software programmes used to edit. And even some of the social networking platforms themselves could be referred to as a Media technology, including things like artificial intelligence and even the internet itself.

So, Media form specifications, these are the different categories of recognisable Media products. So, we talk, of course, about moving images, still images, audio products, print products, digital products. The important point here is that for the VCE Media Study Design, there are very specific specifications when it comes to the Unit 3 and 4 SAT. So, under each of these categories, just have a look in the Unit 3 work about "What are the actual limitations here?" So, a video or film production, for instance, has to be between 3 and 10 minutes in length. Then that includes the title and credit sequences. And so, for every Media form, there are those extra limitations in the VCE Media Study Design.

Media narratives, this is a really crucial idea that no matter what the product that a student might make, you've got to really talk about the narrative that underpins that. And so, Media narratives, for the purposes of this study, are both fictional and non-fictional stories told across all media forms. And we talk about a Narrative as a composition of a story and a plot. And the term story, that's the bigger world of a Media narrative. So that can include all the backstory events, things that might not necessarily be shown or heard or seen. And those events though all contribute to the world of the story. Plot, however, that's what we see in front of us. That's the structured events in time told and shown and encoded, in fact, through the Codes and Conventions of media.

So, what's important here is that any narrative that's made is made through a certain set of Codes and Conventions that both the creators themselves are aware of and obviously manipulate, but the audience is aware of too, so that they can decode that meaning. Media Codes and Conventions then, let's go into that a bit deeper. Codes, of course, are the familiar 'CAMELS', camera, acting, mise en scene, editing, lighting, sound. But, of course, if you're doing a print product, that can include things like text and graphics and even the paper stock. The important thing about Codes is I always tell my students that they're like the ingredients in the media pantry. These are the building blocks of all Media products. Media Conventions, however, they're the kind of agreed upon rules or ways that we put those ingredients together. And so, I think of them almost like my recipe books or the recipes in a media book, a media cookbook.

And so, Conventions can change. Conventions come in and out of style, but we can always talk about three different levels of Conventions. There are Form conventions, so that is the rules or common practises for constructing a Media product in a particular Media form. And a good example there is the 180-degree rule when you're filming and editing a dialogue scene. And that could be the same across a documentary or a fictional feature. That's very different though to the Genre and Style conventions. And they, of course, are the rules that define the emotional and cognitive experience that an audience is expecting when they select to consume a particular Media product. And these Genre and Style conventions, they change all the time as well. They constantly update it as new creators reinvent the way we tell stories using media. But a good example of a Genre convention, for instance, is a 'jump scare'. And we all know what a 'jump scare' is. We all know what its purpose is, to create a sense of shock and anticipation. And we also know the recipe of how you would make a 'jump scare', what sort of camera you would use, what kind of lighting and acting and sound that you would put together to create that emotional response in an audience.

Narrative conventions then, they're the kind of common rules that are found across all stories. These are the ways we even expect a story to be. And so, we talk about things like character and setting, cause and effect, and plot structure itself. So, it's important to understand those three different levels of Conventions when we are talking about Codes and Conventions. Media contexts then, this is how we understand what a Media product means. You can only understand what a Media product means if you take into consideration the social context in which it was produced and, of course, which it was read. So, the study of media context is really an examination of all these factors, social, economic, cultural, political, historical, and all these things affect the production and the way we read a media text.

So, media contexts really are explored through analysing the representations that a story, a Media narrative might have and really considering whether those representations implicitly or explicitly comment on, reflect, develop, reject, or ignore certain social values. This has sort of replaced that bigger discussion of ideology that we used to have in the old Study Design, but that doesn't mean ideology is gone. Ideology is still there. The important thing is to understand that you're really talking about the specific context of the text that you're studying and how it's responding to the time it was made, and, of course, how we read it in a very different context now.

So, the Media Production Process, this isn't just for the students' work when they come to their production work, which, of course, is the main idea that we would be looking at with this production process, but it's something that you actually analyse when you're talking about a media text. You can look at every stage of the Media Production Process and consider for each of those stages, what is the context of which it was made or edited, and what kind of technologies happened at each stage, and how did that influence the production of a Media product? Of course, when we're talking to students, these are some of the prompt questions that I use to guide them through, or to each of these production stages.

So, development, of course, is where they're coming up with their concept. They're researching existing Media products to understand the Genre and Style conventions and even the narrative building blocks that they want to play with. They'll, of course, experiment with some of those things trying out whether they can make some of those Conventions of a particular Media product.

So, once they've done that, once they've had an idea, once they've really decided upon the story, and the way they're going to tell that story, that's when the student will go into Pre-production. And this is where a media producer takes that idea and really fleshes it out, creates all the documentation needed to make a successful product. And this is, of course, things like scripts, storyboards, production schedules. This is where you really decide upon the timeline as well. Like what is it, how is it going to be made, and when is it going to be made? This is also where you get a lot of that paperwork, things like copyright use and talent release forms and location scouting and permission to use a particular location for a setting. This pre-production phase is really probably one of the most important phases. This is where a successful product is really defined and so it's really important that students take a lot of time to think about what is it that their media form that they're working in, well, what kind of workflows are related to that media form?

So, the Production phase, this is where they go out and actually make what they plan to make. And what you would expect here is that there's a lot of diary and production diary recording and reflection happening. So as much as they're going out and shooting a film or recording audio or making their website or whatever it is they're making, you would expect them to record and reflect upon that production schedule. Things change. The students are constantly going to update their shooting schedule. They're going to maybe even, alter their script and do rewrites or recast, all kinds of problems happen when you actually start to make something. And what's important here is that students document those changes and reflect on what the solution was that they came to and how that still matches their original intentions or perhaps they might need to change that as well and talk about the different sort of way their production is headed based on certain unforeseen events.

So, the production schedule is a big part of what they're doing with the making of any Media product. I mean, the main thing here is just, recording and reflecting. Post-production, that's where they put the pieces all together. So, this is where students will be taking all the work that they've captured in film or audio or print or design and making it into an actual recognisable Media product. A big part of this is recording that process as well. Just like in the Production phase, they would be making notes and amendments to their production plan, showing the changes that they've made. But most importantly, in Post-production, they're going to have rough draughts of their work and they can share those draughts with audiences, ideally their target audience, so people that they made their product for, and to get feedback about its success. "Is it working?" "Are the Genre conventions doing what they're meant to do?"

So, there's a lot of reflection, a lot of feedback in the Post-production phase. And, of course, you end with Distribution. And for, of course, a lot of our students, distribution is going to be hypothetical. They might have made a Netflix streaming TV show and they're not, of course, going to actually distribute it on Netflix, but they can talk about that. They can talk about how it would happen hypothetically, but there is a very real part of Distribution too which is showing their work in a screening to parents and family or just even the class and that moment of sharing their work and getting feedback on their final product, that's a really important part of the whole process where they really reflect on its success.

So, when we talk about audience, we can really talk about three different phases or aspects of audience. Obviously, all Media products are made for audiences who consume these products and understand them. And when we talk about audience then, we can talk very specifically about the reception an audience has. So, this is the physical way an audience consumes a Media product, and, of course, the context in which they're consuming it. Audience engagement though, that refers to how audiences are affected emotionally and cognitively by the Media product that they're consuming. And so, this is really about, how do those Codes and Conventions create engagement and what is the nature of that engagement? Audience response then, that is how a Media product may influence an audience to act or change. This can be obviously extreme changes like political beliefs or the way someone believes, a thought about the world, ideological belief. But it can also be more subtle. It can just be the way a particular Media product engages someone so much that their response is to become a fan and dress up and cosplay as their favourite character.

So, audience response can be quite varied. And, of course, it's consumerism as well. How does an advertisement alter the behaviour of an audience to get them to buy more stuff? So, all Media products though are made for target audiences. That's really important to talk about. Sometimes those target audiences are very general, very broad, but often they're more specific. And that specification can come from things like social and historical context and also things like demographics, the age and the gender and the values of a particular audience.

So, Media language for the purpose of this Study really is the words that we use, the phrases that we use. And, of course, that's exactly what we're talking about today. All the language in the Study specifications, that's a big part of what the Media language that we're going to be teaching our students is. For me, I often use an appendix, or I make a lexicon and the students build this over time. They take notes about what words we're using and what they mean. And this really helps them build into all their responses and their reflection in their Media production journals. It really helps them use the right terms and apply them in the right context. So finally, we're going to talk about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, cultures, and history. It's always been an important part of the VCE Media Study Design, but now we have very specific parts in the Study Design, specific outcomes where it's important to not just pick texts that represent First Nations people, but we are looking and selecting texts made by First Nations people. To help do that, it can be really good idea to go to the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association that has a lot of protocols about how to do this and embed these works respectfully. And it's a big part of your job as a Media teacher to select texts that address all aspects of the study.

Okay, so thanks for watching and if you have any more questions, then you can contact Dr. Kathryn Hendy-Ekers who can answer all further questions you have about Media. Thank you.

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