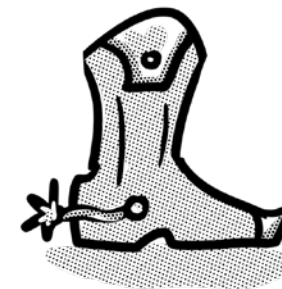
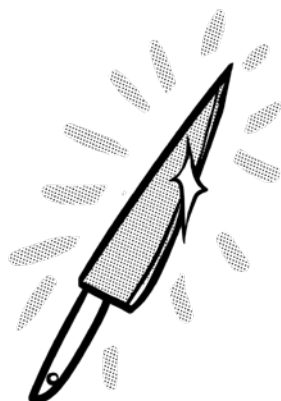
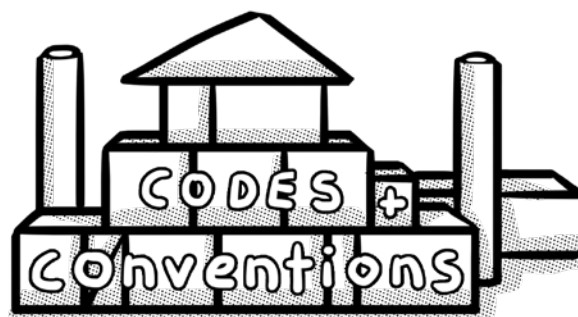
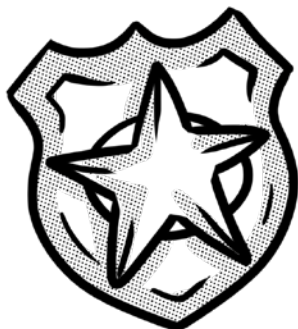


# GCSE Key Concept: Genre



PIXL  
Media Studies



KnowIT

## Why Do we Care About...?

- **Genre**, and **sub-genres**, provide audiences with a specific set of **uses** and **gratifications**; this is key to understanding WHY audiences choose to engage with a media text. However, genre is not only important for audiences, it is vital for **producers** and institutions, as it allows them to shape and sell their media texts through recognisable elements.

## Genre Theory: Steve Neale

### Repetition and Difference

- Steve Neale is a key theorist when exploring the concept of GENRE, he argued that 'genres are instances of repetition and difference', audiences require a certain level of **familiarity** within a genre, however they need an element of **originality** to keep the text engaging. Elements of familiarity might include:

**Character types.**

**Narrative structure.**

**Location.**

**mise-en-scene.**

**Star personas.**

**Music.**

Choose three different genres and find out what the key genre signifiers are for that genre. Explain what pleasures audiences might gain from recognising these.

## Genre Theory: Robert Fiske

- Fiske explores the **building blocks** of genre, he identifies the fact that all genres have their own set of **codes** and **conventions** that the audience read. He states 'Genre attempts to structure some order into the wide range of texts and meanings that circulate in our culture for the convenience of both producers and audiences'.

## Genre and Audience Appeal

- Audiences use genre to help them decide whether they want to **engage** in a media text. Audiences have a set of **expectations** linked with different genres; from these expectations they know whether they will gain pleasure from a specific genre or not, they will also gain pleasure from identifying elements within the narrative and predicting outcomes.

# GENRE

**noun: a type, or category, of media text**

## Genre Theory: Rick Altman

### Semantics and Syntactics

In his book Film/Genre Altman explores the role audiences and producers play in shaping and redefining different genres, identifying the fact that the term genre has different meanings for different groups of people. He discusses two elements that are fundamental to genre study:

- **Semantic elements** - elements within the text that are used to communicate the genre e.g. props, locations, camera work, sound.
- **Syntactic elements** - the way elements interact within the text to communicate messages and values to the audience e.g. narrative expectations, themes, plot structure.

## Genre & Institutions

- Genre is vital for **institutions** as it allows them to market their media texts to their target audience, this directly influences the **financial** success of a media product. Within cinema there are certain **star personas** that are linked with specific genres, these genre stars are key in **marketing** these films and ensuring the **financial success** of a film. Certain genres are more commercially successful than others due to the gratifications associated with them often linked to production values.

Can you carry out your own primary research into which genres are the most commercially successful in the box office? Why do you think this/these genres are so appealing to mainstream mass audiences? How important are star personas in ensuring the success of films in these genres?

## Genre Theory: Henry Jenkins

- Jenkins writes that 'all works are born from a mixture of invention and convention', due to the **digitalisation of the Media**, audiences are now able to **manipulate** genres and feed into genre development. Institutions further add to this through producing their own **hybridised** versions of traditional genre texts; think about the **zom-rom-com** film Shaun of the Dead that is a hybrid of 3 traditional genres.

## Genre Key Terms

Iconography	Codes
Conventions	Signifiers
Gratifications	Signs
Parody	Pastiche
Semantic	Syntactic
Hybrid	Sub-genre

Research the definitions of these key terms then produce an infographic explaining their meaning. Add a range of GENRE SIGNIFIERS to your product and highlight the pleasures associated with these.