

Why do we care about...

Without an audience there would be no point in having a media text! Audiences and their specific needs often shape the final production of media texts.

The relationship between the product and the audience is often explored when analysing the impact of media texts.

Defining an Audience

Demographic Profiles:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Socio-economic status
- Sexuality
- Religion

Media producers need to have a clear understanding of who their target audience are in order to understand their motivations in engaging with a specific media text.

Defining an Audience

Media producers often use psychographic profiling when defining their target audiences. Psychographic profiling takes into account the personality, values, opinions, attitudes, interests and lifestyles of a target audience.

Psychographic Profile categories:

- Mainstreamers
- Aspirers
- Succeeders
- Resigned
- Explorers
- Strugglers
- Reformers

Each of these groups will have their own motivations for engaging in a media text, based on their personal traits & interests

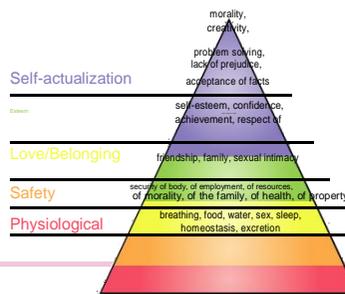
Q. How does knowing the target audience profile in detail help media producers in shaping their texts?

Participatory Culture and We Media

This refers to audiences moving away from **consumers** of media to **producers** of media. **Henry Jenkins** has written about how developments of digital technologies have changed the **media landscape**.

Q. How have audiences gained more control over the media they consume?

Audience Theories Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Maslow argued that all humans had 5 levels of need (as seen in the diagram). Media products often target these needs through offering products or texts that fulfil one of more of these.

Q. How do contemporary

media texts offer audiences a sense of 'Love & Belonging'?

AUDIENCE

noun:

a person or group of people that consume a media product

Active Audiences

Stuart Hall's **RECEPTION THEORY** explores the notion that audiences are active readers of media texts, interpreting the **messages** within media texts based on their own **cultural background**. He states there are three ways an audience can **read** a media text:

1. **Preferred/Dominant**: how the producer wants the audience to respond.
2. **Negotiated**: the audience recognise the preferred reading, but do not necessarily agree or accept it.
3. **Oppositional**: the audience reject the preferred meaning.

Q. How do producers of media texts create responses from their audiences?

Audience Theories

Richard Dyer's Utopian Solutions

Dyer argues that the media products construct themselves as offering audiences **solutions** that will solve their problems and lead them to their utopian. This is commonly seen in the medium of **advertising**.

Q. How do media texts appear to offer audiences 'solutions'?

Audience Theories

Blumler and Katz's Uses & Gratifications Theory

Part of the **ACTIVE AUDIENCE** model, this theory suggests there are **FIVE** key reasons why an audience choose to engage with a media product:

1. **Information/Education**
2. **Identification**
3. **Entertainment**
4. **Social Interaction**
5. **Escapism**

Q. How does understanding the gratifications your audience are looking for inform your production?

Audience Theories

George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory

Writing in the 1970s Gerbner argued that the more an audience has contact with the media (especially television) the more likely it was that their perceptions of reality would be altered. **Q. Can audience's views be shaped by the Media?**

Audience Key Terms

Primary Research - research conducted first hand by the producer of a media text, this can be qualitative or quantitative data, and is an essential part of the pre-production planning.

Secondary Research - research that has already been conducted by academics into a particular field (theories).