MEDIA STUDIES BTEC

STUDYING: Magazines

For your BTEC course you will be required to analyse and create your own magazine. This set work will support you with this process. I look forward to receiving the work set in our first lesson to show your commitment to the course.

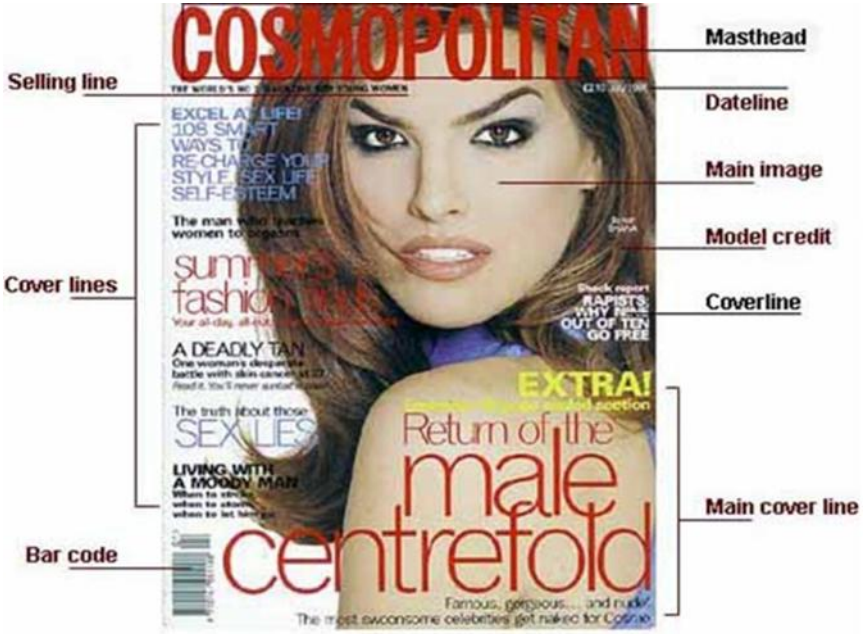
How to analyse a magazine cover

The Front Cover

The front cover is vital in communicating a clear sense of the brand identity of the magazine to the target audience and in appealing to potential readers at the news stand. In such a competitive print market, magazine front covers need to stand out and attract the attention of potential purchasers. It is important that the front cover maintains a clear sense of familiarity for regular readers but also attracts potential new readers. Front covers have a clear set of expected codes and conventions (see next slide for definition). Mainstream magazines tend to conform quite closely to these conventions while magazines produced outside the commercial mainstream are more likely to challenge or subvert these conventions.

Layout and Design

Conventions



TASK

Find a front cover of a magazine on-line and paste it into your work. Annotated the front cover showing all the conventions used. You can select any genre of magazine for this task.

All media products have what we call ‘Conventions’ this means what an audience expect to see when looking at a magazine in order to recognize it is a magazine.

TASK

Research on-line what conventions you would expect to see on a front cover of a magazine. Note these down to hand in at the start of your BTEC course as well as a definition of what ‘Convention’ means

The Generic Conventions of Magazines:

Front Covers

The main function of front covers of magazines is to sell the magazine – they are the shop front of the magazine – they are deliberately eye – catching, interesting and brightly coloured.

They also clearly display the **‘house-style’** of the magazine – this is their repeated image (created through fonts, layout and colour) to create and maintain a **loyal audience/readership**.

Many magazines use a **slogan** – it is used under the header to explain the magazine content or to make it stand out from its rivals.

The mast head- usually at the top of the page (this logo/header will also create the ‘brand image’ of your magazine and will make it instantly recognisable for your audience.)

There is usually a **variety of fonts on the cover (3/4)** to make it interesting – but some magazines break the rules and use the same one throughout – like Q magazine.

The central image:
One main model/star photographed either in close up (head and shoulders shot) or medium shot - **direct address (mode of address)** *in music magazines it can be a group shot.)*

Usually **shot in a studio.**

This will be the content of the **feature article** of the magazine.

The Gaze: Is it direct address – looking at the reader? This is welcoming and creates a bond between the magazine and the audience/reader. This is the most common use. If the **main model/star is looking away it is breaking the rules** – but can look cool!

Cover lines/ Tag lines- are the main text on the cover – they advertise the articles within the magazine to entice the reader.

Most pages will have a **colour palette** – a defined choice of colours – to create a recognisable **house-style/ image**

Many magazines will have the price text larger or include free gifts as a **lure**.

The feature article cover line is always bigger than the rest and dominates the page – the one that the producers hope will sell the magazine!

Straplines - usually go at the top or bottom of the page -highlighting stars in the magazine or other stories/sections in the magazine – this magazine does not use these however.

Date and barcode - usually now with a web address provided to entice audiences to the magazines’ website.

Verbal and Non- verbal communication: *In many print texts such as magazines more is communicated to the audience through the use of non-verbal than verbal communication.*

Here is a list of further conventions. Research whether you would expect to find these on a front page, contents page or article page of a magazine.

TASK

Write these terms and definitions down and then explain next to each one where they would be seen in a magazine

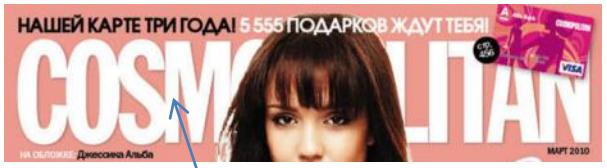
Masthead – the masthead is the title block for the magazine, usually this is the most eye-catching convention on a page and has to be distinct.
Menu – the list of contents inside the paper.
Pugs – to catch the reader's eye they are well placed. a pug is the top left hand and right hand corner of a magazine. the prices, logo, position are placed here.
Secondary lead – a sneak preview of an inside article or story usually a picture.
Sidebar – an additional box next to the main feature of the magazine
Splash – main story of the front page accompanied with the headline and a photograph.
Spread – a story that covers more than one page.
Stand first – sentence after a headline and before an article begins that 'sells' a feature to a reader.
Strapline –subheading, (heading below the initial headline
Tag – categorizing the reader's interest in a story by using a word or phrase to engage them e.g. sensational, new, exclusive.
tip-on-affixed to the publication is a promotional item such as an magnet or game piece.

Cover line

Font style

Size

Colour



Mast head

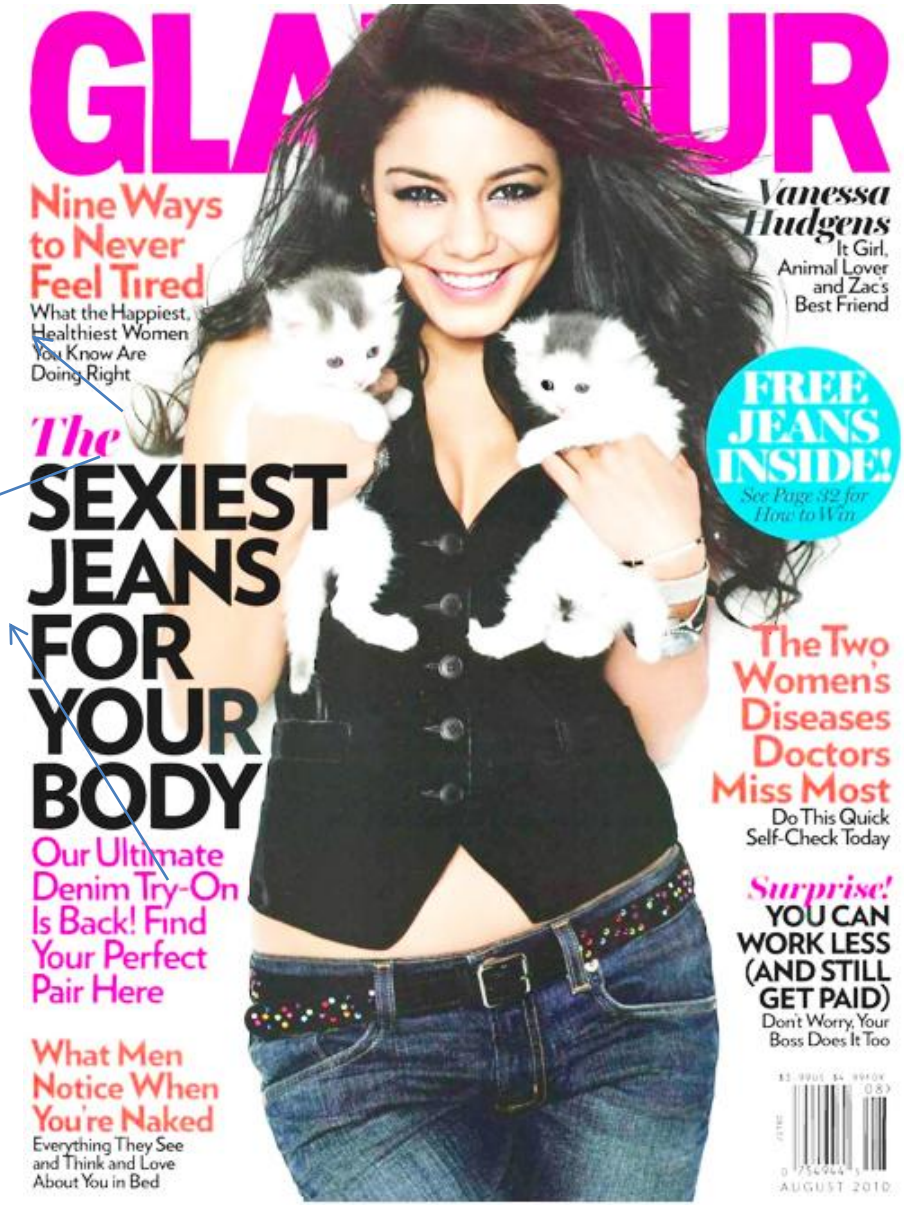
Typography – this is the same as fonts, it's just a more grown-up term!

Task – Create an A4 page explaining the difference between serif and sans serif fonts (you will need to research what these are). Then go onto Dafont and screen shot or downlad onto the ~~work you will hand in, 3 fonts for a woman's fashion magazine AND 3 fonts for~~ a man's football magazine. How do these fonts vary in their style? Provide an explanation and also annotate each font stating the image it gives to the reader.

Composition and graphics

- Think about what needs to be seen by target audience
- How to make information or selling points stand out. This circle of information is called a puff. <u>Note this down</u>.
- TASK - http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_1-32/_eng/unit2/2a-terminology-matchup.html

Go to this link and complete the exercise on your worksheets ready to hand in on your first day back to school.



Language

THE UK'S BESTSELLING MONTHLY MAGAZINE

KERRANG!

TASK

Select another front cover of a magazine or use this one and put it in your work. Now analyse the language used by the magazine editor to draw the audience in and help the audience immediately recognize what genre of magazine it is and which gender it is targeting. How does the language reflect the Connotations of the title of the magazine and what the magazine stands for (ethos). Use the next 2 slides to support you with some ideas.

Mode of Address

This means the way the editor addresses the audience through their choice of words. These can create a formal or informal feel (note this definition down in your work)

- **Imperatives (must have)**
- **Rhetorical Q**
- **Quotations**
- **Direct address (You)**
- **Inclusive language (We)**

Persuasive Techniques

These are ways the editors of a magazine use language or imagery to <u>persuade</u> the audience to buy the magazine. Note this definition down in your work

- **Alliteration (best bargain buys)**
- **Hyperbole (exaggeration)**
- **Word play / puns**
- **Superlatives (best / - est)**
- **Humour**
- **Direct address (using pronouns or getting models to look directly at the audience as though speaking directly to them)**

- **<u>Numbers:</u>**
- **Specific**
- **Often odd**

CHALLENGE

http://www.magazinedesigning.com/55-best-tips-for-a-sucessful-magazine-cover/

Read this article and write 5 things doen that go to make a front cover of a magazine successful.

FINAL TASK

- Design your own front page of a magazine by either drawing it or photographing it and designing it on a computer. Either option is fine. Be sure to apply the following conventions:
- Masthead – make sure it is a conventional size
- 5 Coverlines – make sure you use a variety of fonts in a variety of sizes (the most important articles should be in the largest fonts.
- Slogan
- Puff
- Add 3 more conventions of your own choosing.

I look forward to meeting you all soon!