



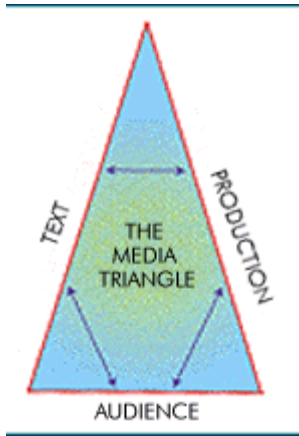
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Working with Media as a Text The Media Triangle

<http://medialit.med.sc.edu/mediatriangle.htm>



The **Media Triangle** above provides students and teachers with a checklist of questions for deconstructing media texts. The triangle starts from the assumption that each media text is produced in a particular way, for a particular audience.

Text: A film, a song, a documentary, a video game, a music video, a product advertisement, and any other media presentation are all considered as text. The following questions are helpful to a student who is examining any such text.

1. In what ways does this text tell a story? Does it connect to a larger story?
2. What type or category of story is it? Does it follow a formula?
3. What codes and conventions are used?
4. What are the characters like? Are they realistic? Are they stereotypes? Is there an expected running time for a film or song? Are there any copyright or trademarks used to protect certain words or products?
5. How do the characters relate to each other in terms of power, age, gender, race and class?
6. What are the values and ideology of the characters? To what extent do I share these beliefs?

Production: The second element of a media text to consider is the production of that text.

1. Where does this text come from? Who created it? Who owns it?
2. How is this text distributed or sold to the public? Who profits?
3. How was the text made? What production techniques were used?
4. What rules and laws affect this text? Is there an expected running time for a film or song? Are there any copyright or trademarks used to protect certain words or products?
5. How could I produce a similar text?

Audience: The final element to consider when examining a media text is the audience—those people for whom the text is created.

1. How does this text appeal to me? What things do I like and dislike?
2. Who is the intended target audience?
3. How and why does this text appeal to its audience?
4. In what different ways do people use or consume this text?
5. How could I change the text to make it more enjoyable?

Since our students spend a great deal of time involved with various texts—other than the printed word, we would do well to educate them about how such texts are constructed, what such texts mean, and how such texts manipulate their responses.

The third section, Audience, is particularly helpful in preparing students for the CAPT Response to Literature subtest. In that section, students are asked to evaluate a written text, determining and explaining if it is a “good” text. Students must define what, to them, constitutes a “good” text. They must also support their definition by referring to the story.