**Kathryn Hendy-Ekers** - Welcome to the on-demand video sessions for VCE Media for Implementation. This presentation is for Unit 1 for VCE Media, to be implemented or commenced in 2024. My name is Kathryn Hendy-Ekers, and I'm the Curriculum Manager for Visual Arts, Media, and Visual Communication and Design, and with me to go through this presentation, I have Ed Armstrong, who is an experienced VCE Media teacher.

In this presentation, we'll go through VCE Media, through the Study specifications, an overview of Unit 1, looking at the three areas of Media Representations, Media Forms, and Australian Stories, the key knowledge and key skills for each area, ways into designing formative and summative assessments, and a sample timeline. So, at the front of the Media Study Design, you have a list of the Study specifications that are examinable and cover all the key knowledge and key skills across the four units. There has been some change into these Study specifications, so please read these very carefully. We have media literacy, media products, media forms, media technologies, media contexts, audience, and media language.

Some of the specific areas that you do need to very closely investigate are the definitions of, say, for example, media narratives, listed here, which are the fictional and non-fictional stories in all media forms, and the composition of a narrative, which is composed of the story and the plot. So, the term "story" refers to all of the events in the narrative while the plot refers to how the story is structured or told, and they are also a depiction of the chain of events in a cause-and-effect relationship occurring in physical or virtual spaces over a period of time, and they are constructed using the elements of plot in a systematically organised series of interconnected images, sounds, or words using media codes and conventions.

This time round, for VCE Media, we have put in some information about the creator and the audience and how they share that understanding of the construction, distribution, consumption, and reception of stories, and digital media forms enable creators and participants to develop and distribute stories in hybrid forms, including collaborative and user-generated content, which challenges the traditional understanding of story forms and advances new modes of audience engagement.

So, this includes, as you know, any aspects of social media that your students may be viewing over time. And we also talk about media context, which is the societal context in which media products are produced and read, and that is quite a change in the study design, so it is really important that you have a look at these definitions of media context. So, it's those factors including social, cultural, economic, political, and/or historical factors that may influence the production and audience readings, and media contexts are explored through an analysis of these factors.

We also have media codes. They have been updated. So, you can see on the screen here, we have the media codes, which include camera, acting, mise en scene, editing, lighting, sound, typography, colour, visual composition, text, graphics, and paper stock for print, so it depends on the media form that you are investigating with your students what media codes you are looking at. There's been a change to the conventions, so you can see, they are the rules or generally accepted ways of constructing meaning or organising media products. So, they may refer to the rules and common practises for constructing and organising those forms and products, genre conventions, and narrative conventions. Also, we have put in information about audience, particularly about audience reception, audience engagement, and audience response. Underpinning the Media Study Design, we have the media production process.

So, again, there hasn't been a significant change to the media production process, but you can see, here we have the idea of development, pre-production, production, post-production, and distribution, and they are all outlined in detail in the Study Design. So, for Unit 1, here's just an overview of the three Areas of Study for Unit 1. This information will be available in the support material for teachers when published on the VCE Media Study Design page. So, you can see, for each area of study, there is a key question that you can investigate with your students. So, for the first one, media representations, the key question is how we see ourselves and our world in media products. The focus is media literacy and language, media codes, contexts and conventions of forms and products. The formative assessment is written tasks that document the reception and reading of representations and reflect on the codes and conventions used to construct them, and then you have the summative task that is published in the Study Design.

So, for Area of Study 2, students are investigating media forms in productions, so they look at the media production process, codes and conventions, media forms and technologies. So, the formative assessment is listed there, and then there is a summative assessment of a produced media representation. And then, the third one is about Australian Stories in fictional and non-fictional, and there is a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, cultures, and history, again, media literacy and language, media context, audience engagement and reception. And the formative and summative assessment tasks are listed, and we'll go through those in a moment. Just to point out, there is a Glossary of command terms that the VCAA has published, and we have spoken about this in School-assessed Task material.

You can see that on this, there is a link to the page where the command terms are listed. There is a definition of each term. Those terms have been used to construct the key knowledge and key skills for the Media Study Design, so it's really important that you do investigate those. So, we're just going to go on with a rough overview of the three Areas of Study for Unit 1 in this presentation, so starting with Unit 1, Area of Study 1, where we're looking at media representations.

So, you can see the Outcome here is, on completion of this unit, the student should be able to explain the construction of media representations in different products, forms, and contexts, including how audiences engage with, consume, and read these representations. So, you can see the key knowledge is listed underneath, so looking at the nature of media representations, the codes and conventions, how representations are constructed in different contexts, audience engagement and consumption, reading and production of media representations in different media products.

So, it is important that your students need to look at more than one media form. Then the social and institutional relationships between audiences and the media, and, of course, media language in the analysis and discussion. The key skills are that students, and you can see here, they have to explain the nature and form of representations, analyse the media codes and conventions, compare the construction of representations, discuss how audiences engage with and consume, discuss the social and institutional factors, and media language in the analysis and discussion. So, I'm going to hand it over to Ed now, just talking about Unit 1, Area of Study 1. So, over to you, Ed.

**Ed Armstrong** - Thanks, Kathy. So, I guess I normally start with planning with my summative assessments in mind, so I'll start off talking about the micro aspects of assessments, and then we'll look, at the end of this presentation, at my timeline and how it all kind of fits together. What I normally do for Area of Study 1, Unit 1, is just, normally, I set them up with just, my class, with a series of short answer worksheets, and I spread the weighting out over basically the first term, and that kind of readies students for their final presentation. You can do this as a video essay if you like, but I kind of like, I'm in a fairly unique school, at Swinburne Senior Secondary College, so I only basically teach Year 11 and 12. So, all the Year 11 students are quite new to each other, so I find that having a presentation where they can present in front of each other will actually get them to know each other a bit more and kind of is a bit of an icebreaker, if you know what I mean.

So, they basically will compare and contrast at least three media products and how the representation within those media products has changed over time. So, I've had students present on teenagers in feature films and television and how that's changed from, you know, "Rebel Without a Cause" to "Euphoria". I've had them present on depictions of mental illness in women, so looking at a range of different films and television shows and that representation, so, you know, "Fatal Attraction" to "Girl Interrupted" to "Euphoria" and "Skins". Also, I've had them look at depictions of ASD as well in the media. So, you know, looking at "Rain Man" and how "Rain Man" is constructed as a representation compared to, you know, for example, "Community" or the film "Music", which is quite a controversial film, made by Sia, which was a fairly negative construction of someone with ASD.

So, that's generally kind of what I get them to do, is about basically a five-to-10-minute presentation in front of the class with some slides to support them. And then, I guess, formative assessments is basically those worksheets building up to the summative assessment, but throughout the first term, I go through a bunch of just short, little class-based activities, which gets them to analyse codes, understand conventions, look at how diversity is currently represented on screens or within the media, so look at some statistics, such as the State of the Media Report from 2021. And sometimes I pop in some scenes as well from different documentaries that focus on representation. 'Apu', the representation in "The Simpsons", is a bit of 'an oldie, but a goldie' to have a look at and see how that, like, negative representation has been interpreted within America and across the world, but also, you know, how it is an endearing look on Indian cultures as well. Thanks, Kathy.

**Kathryn Hendy-Ekers** - Thanks. Okay, just moving on to Area of Study 2. So, the Outcome here is that the students should be able to use the media production process to design, produce, and evaluate media representations for specified audiences in a range of media forms. So, you can see here in the key knowledge, you've got the stages in the process, the techniques used to represent ideas and achieve effects, codes and conventions, the technologies, so, again, go back to the Study specifications and really look at the definitions of those Study specifications so you and your students understand those, the characteristics of a range of media representations in media forms, and the language appropriate to the design, production, and evaluation of media representations in a range of forms. So, again, the key skills are virtually those, that knowledge applied, so the students that are developing are using a production process to design, produce, and evaluate their media representations in a range of forms. So, Ed, do you want to just speak about how you approach this?

**Ed Armstrong** - It's a bit of a shout-out to Jeremy Guzman, who actually gave me this idea originally at an ATOM conference, which is a fantastic idea to appropriate the beloved "Humans of New York" series of social media feeds to my school context, so changing it from "Humans of New York" to "Humans of Swinburne", and it's really great, and the students really enjoy, you know, giving a platform or giving a voice to their own community. That's a short exercise, that they create a little project that tests photography in the hybrid media, so you can see a couple of examples down there on the slide. You know, they basically just lift a quote from a short interview that they've done with a student, and a staff member as well, and they approach it in quite different ways, as you can see. Some students have more of a bit of a fly on the wall kind of photograph, whereas others have perhaps constructed a bit more.

So, you see one of my colleagues there being photographed with a golden glow coming out of the book, kind of referencing "Pulp Fiction" and his love for that, as well as love for literature because he is a 'Lit' teacher. So, I get them to document not only students, but staff members, and even admin staff, and I always try to encourage them to document the cleaner as well, you know, give a bit of a 'shout-out'. So, that's really fun for them, to put that together, and is also really helpful for if your school has a social media feed as well, to pop it up there, but I generally try to get them to 'run the gamut' of different media forms because this is really the opportunity for them to have a taste of different media forms, and it informs their choice for Year 12 media as well. So, I start off with a comic strip, getting them to construct a narrative through a couple of panels, and then look at animation and maybe potentially looping one of those panels, and then, the Instagram series of photographs, and then I get them to do a little bit of a 'micro doco' and a fictional short story as well, which kind of mirrors what we do in 'Australian Stories'.

So, I guess the formative assessments leading up to that is just them testing their pre-production and their planning skills. So, I normally just stagger this up in terms of, you know, starting fairly bare bones at the start of the unit with what is required for their pre-production, and by the end of the term, or the end of the semester, get them to really do a thorough pre-production, so you can see, you know, statement of intention, a rationale for, you know, choosing the particular subjects and the interview questions for their "Humans of Swinburne" project. What locations as well, you know, the symbolic reference to the locations that they're actually using, so thinking about the symbolic code of.... "Should I position them in front of the lockers?", or "Should I position them in front of the canteen?", depending on, you know, who the character is. So, you know, trying to construct their representation, and thinking about the equipment list and the lighting diagrams as well. Even if your school doesn't have many lights, thinking about the direction of the sun and what time of day it's going to be. So, just some forethought around planning the construction of these representations of these community members.

**Kathryn Hendy-Ekers** - Thanks, Ed. So, going on to Unit 1, Area of Study 3, which is Australian Stories. So, this is where students analyse. So, they've done media representations, they've done their production process, so they're now looking at the structural features of media narratives with a focus on Australian fictional and non-fictional narratives in two or more media forms and how they're engaged, consumed, and read by audiences. So, again, they're looking at the structure of those narratives, the codes and conventions, the style of the media creator and producer. Then we have a particular key knowledge and key skill that's been introduced in this study about the impact of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and perspectives on our national identity and story, and then the impact of institutional, economic, social, and political constraints on the production and distribution of fictional and nonfictional narratives, and how audiences engage with those narratives and their expectations, and, of course, media language.

So, you can see, most of the key skills mirror the key knowledge, but in terms of students' need to analyse the structure, the codes and conventions, the construction of the narrative, the impact of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and perspectives, the impact of institutional, economic, social, and political constraints, and the factors that affect audience engagement and reception and consumption, and prior reading of narratives in a range of contexts. So, Ed, do you just want to go through what you would do here with a couple of these approaches?

**Ed Armstrong** - Sure, so in terms of the summative assessments, I normally, well, I guess, you know, 'narrative and ideology' is a bit, a bit outdated now. We've got 'Narrative in contexts', but the same applies in terms of thinking forward to Year 12 and how to prepare them for that Area of Study. So, I've kind of created a bit of a mini version of that for Australian Stories, and I normally focus on "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert", which is fantastic if you think about the context of that film as well because, you know, it's right off the back of the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s, and Australia was in, still, quite an interesting position in terms of recognising, and also legalising, same-sex relationships.

So, you know, when the film was made, in Tasmania, it was still illegal to be in a same-sex relationship. So, it was quite ground-breaking in that respect socially, so if we're thinking about contexts and how that influences the film and how it kind of champions a particular cause, but also does it in a light-hearted way, you know. Stephan Elliott has a lot of gags in there and really heavily relies on a lot of the humour to humanise and include, you know, same sex attracted people as well as, you know, 'Trans' people as well. So, it has a full kind of, I think, a really kind of light way of, and makes, you know, I guess, in that way, it makes it far more accessible to a larger group of people. So, I kind of talk along those lines. And what's great about "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert" as well is that there's a behind-the-scenes documentary, "Between a Frock and a Hard Place", which talks about the construction of the film and what was actually happening socio-politically in the background.

And then I get them to compare that or look at a non-fictional narrative, which is a more recent film called "Franklin” and shine a spotlight on local filmmakers because Kasimir Burgess directed that, and I actually got him to come in to school earlier this year to have a Q&A with the students, and it was really a rich discussion about how he actually constructed the film. Also, similarly, a really rich socio-political backdrop for "Franklin", talking about the Franklin Campaign to save the river from damming back in the '80s, and also how that translates, interestingly, to current issues, where there are governments at the moment, State and Federal governments, you know, making it incredibly difficult for activists to make a stand publicly. There's huge penalties now and, you know, prison sentences that activists are facing with new laws. So, it really speaks to this ongoing discourse and this narrative within our nation about how we actually present on particular issues, and, you know, I think that's really a meaty topic to 'chew on' for the students.

So, the formative assessments leading up to this particular, I guess, written SAC is more activities on, just really short activities for the students to really understand how impactful genre is and narrative structure. Especially with "Priscilla", you know, the soundtrack, you know, it could be classified as a soundtrack film, very similar to, like, "Baby Driver", for example, which is more current. Talking about style and really equipping them with the language and vocabulary around how to actually articulate style. You know, both of these filmmakers have quite unique styles, and looking at their back filmography and their back retrospective of what they've actually produced in the past and trying to really put a finger on what their style is and how to articulate that, and that can be aesthetically as well as structurally.

Thinking about documentary modes as well is a good opportunity to introduce them to understanding documentary modes, so Bill Nichols' schema about different types of documentaries. So, it's almost kind of like sub-genres, and then, socio-political and institutional contexts as well and understanding that. So, I've just, you know, whipped up some slides and some resources around both of these films that you can access via the "Franklin" website, which they've made to be in the public domain. So, there is, you know, a creative licence for you to actually use those resources as a starting place, if you want to check them out.

**Kathryn Hendy-Ekers** - So, when you get it, there will be a published copy of this presentation with the recording, and you can click on the link to go through. Okay, so just to finally finish up here, just if you would like to talk through your timeline here.

**Ed Armstrong** - As you can see, I'm kind of bouncing between the first two Areas of Study because I feel like you need to work on the analysis as well as the practical skills of construction of representation. So, you know, you learn a little bit about the history of print media, and they have a short worksheet in class to complete for that, but then they actually put that into practice, and they use those particular codes and conventions that are associated with constructing print media. And the same goes for animation, as you can see, and then photographic media, and then hybrid media as well. So, thinking about, you know, Instagram as a platform and what conventions are associated with Instagram, whether you're talking about 'folksonomies' with hashtags or whether you're talking about the aspect ratio as well, often quite square.

So, thinking about all of these considerations, and analysing it first, and then putting those, putting that knowledge into practice and building on practical skills. And then that takes us into the next term. I normally try to get them to go into ACMI for an excursion, to check out the free exhibition, "The History of the Moving Image", which is a fantastic exhibition. If you haven't seen it yet, please do, and then I've also paired that with "Top Screen" and "Meet the Filmmakers" to kind of whet their appetite about pursuing media in Year 12 as well. And then we get stuck into, Australian Stories and looking at the different, the different films, the fictional and nonfictional films, and that's paired with them experimenting on really, really short documentaries and short fictional shorts. So, you know, a micro doco of 60 seconds, you know, where they can, you know, smash out the production in one lesson and then post-production in the following lesson, so within a week, really, they're running the 'full gamut' of actually producing a short project.

**Kathryn Hendy-Ekers** - Thanks very much, Ed, that's been really useful. So, if you need any further information about Unit 1 or the new Study Design, please contact me. There will be a webinar available in August of 2023 where you can ask any further questions about the new Study Design. So, thanks very much, Ed.

**Ed Armstrong** - No worries.

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