

POLITICAL CONTEXT

- The Guardian can be considered a **Liberal/left-leaning** **broadsheet** for **ABCI Reformers** who are mostly likely to vote for either Labour, Liberal Democrats, SNP or the Green Party.
- The readership are perceived as an **active audience**.
- Most readers are critical of **Conservative politics**, and The Guardian often engage in articles which represent Conservatives unfavourably, even if framed with **objectivity**.
- The Guardian is not owned by a **media baron** or by shareholder, instead, by a group known as **The Scott's Trust**, which includes the current editor (Katherine Viner) and former editor (Alan Rusbridger).

POLITICAL CONTEXT

- From 2019-20, Dominic Cummings served as PM Boris Johnson's **Chief Political Advisor** – forced out of Downing Street after an **internal power struggle**. Cummings published a blog where he revealed events and activities that took place during his time at No.10 with a series of **allegations** against the PM, the Conservative MPs and staff.
- Covid-19 pandemic is a **global pandemic** first identified in December 2019 before being declared in March 2020 – by April 2022, it had caused approximately 6 million deaths globally.
- The UK's strategy to reduce deaths was a **lockdown**, where legal measures were brought in to prevent **social mixing** – indoor gatherings were banned from different households, and those breaking the law could be fined.
- Many offices and institutions closed and workers were advised to work from home.
- Some returned to offices in reduced numbers from Jan 2022.
- Preventative measures in hospitals and healthcare settings include the use of **PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)** such as masks, visors, gloves and gowns.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

- One heading references the **Russia-Ukraine war** – the 2019 presidential election saw pro-EU leader Volodymyr Zelensky come to power, when former Ukrainian leaders had been pro-Russia.
- Border contentions between Ukraine and Russia escalated, as Putin feared invasion with suggestions of Ukraine's impending **NATO membership**, and reacted with a **violent invasion**.
- The **heading** "UK sending anti-tank weapons to Ukraine" relates to the UK government's support of Ukraine in fighting Russia under Putin's leadership.

IMAGE & ANCHORAGE

- The **dominant image** is a **long shot** of Boris Johnson jogging with his dog dressed in a beanie hat, woollen jumper, black socks, spotty patterned shorts and black trainers which does not conform to a statesmanlike image.
- The **image** is **anchored** with the caption "The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, jogs with his dog through St James' Park near Downing Street yesterday."
- Boris looks **unsportsmanlike** implying that he is inept (unfit to be Prime Minister).
- The fish shorts and black leather effect trainers are not a conventional costume for a runner, giving the impression of a clownish Prime Minister.
- Boris' representation aligns with The Guardian's **left-leaning**, anti-Johnson beliefs.

REPRESENTATION

- G2 supplement: **stereotypes** of the workplace – the office romance, the geek, the joker.
- Hall's Representation theory – the newspaper reinforces a **populist ideology** that the political elite are inept and out of touch with reality.

Media Language Questions

- Identify codes and conventions.
- Reference the magazine genre.
- How the historical context informs meanings.
- Layout/design/composition choices and connotations.
- Images (shot type, angle, focus)
- Typography (serif/sans-serif, colour, font type).
- Mise-en-scene – props, costumes, hair/make-up, settings, lighting, colour.
- Language/lexis – slogan/tagline and any copy included in the magazine.
- Anchorage of image and text.

Product context

- The Guardian is a British **national daily newspaper** with an average daily **circulation** of roughly 150,000 copies of their print edition in the UK including 51,000 **subscriptions**.
- The Guardian newspaper targets a well-educated, affluent, relatively young and **liberal** audience.
- The **Demographic** is 89% **ABCI**.
- 52% Guardian readers are male, and average reader age is 44.
- The Guardian has a UK online edition which has over 42.6 million readers (as of October 2014).
- In 2006, The Guardian went through a complete **redesign**. It became smaller, had a new **typeface** and balanced the longer pieces of journalism out with many shorter stories. The reasons for this were twofold: to adapt to what was going on in the market (The Independent and The Times had already changed to a tabloid format) and to adapt to people's **reading habits**, with people now having little time to spare and increasingly 'reading on the go'.

LAYOUT & DESIGN & WRITTEN LANGUAGE

The **dateline** (18 January 2022), **price-line** (£2.50) are **anchored to the masthead** inside the **blue skybox**. The **issue number** illustrates the long history of the newspaper (formed in 1907), the price suggests the paper's upmarket ABCI readership, and the **pug** creates familiar **iconography**.



Cummings accuses PM of lying over No 10 party

Domestic Affairs
Headline
Domestic: Cummings has accused Boris Johnson of lying after he denied the prime minister wanted to attend a party in Downing Street last night. Cummings said he had seen the prime minister in the garden of 10 Downing Street last night, saying he saw him "in a state of shock" and "in a state of panic". Cummings said he had seen the prime minister in the garden of 10 Downing Street last night, saying he saw him "in a state of shock" and "in a state of panic". Cummings said he had seen the prime minister in the garden of 10 Downing Street last night, saying he saw him "in a state of shock" and "in a state of panic".



UK sending anti-tank weapons to Ukraine

Domestic Affairs
Headline
The UK has agreed to send anti-tank weapons to Ukraine, a move seen as a significant escalation in support for the country's fight against Russian forces. The decision was announced by the Defence Secretary, Ben Wallace, who said the UK was "committed to supporting Ukraine in its fight for freedom and democracy".

Inquiry launched into Mone over 'VIP lane' deal

Domestic Affairs
Headline
A full-scale investigation has been launched into the alleged "VIP lane" deal struck by the Conservative Party's former leader, Iain Duncan Smith, with a former aide. The inquiry was launched by the Conservative Party's internal affairs committee, which is led by the party's deputy leader, Piers Morgan.

REPRESENTATION

- The **frontpage** includes political stories which seem to frame Conservatives as amoral or untrustworthy.
- In the **main image** and two articles, Johnson and Mone are portrayed as dishonest.
- The **main image** presents the former PM as clownlike who did not conform to the professional, statesmanlike, composed and confident **stereotypes** of a leader.
- Boris is arguably **stereotyped** as inept with mockery of his decision – this can also feature in **right-wing** papers, but the **satire** of Boris comes from the wish to see the Conservatives lose the next election.
- The decision to use more **inclusive** language in the Ukraine story (such as UK) suggests that the editorial team support Ukraine in their battle against Russia.

EXAM PREPARATION

- Pride could feature in a Component IA Language/Representation question.
- For a Component IA Representation question, if Pride is chosen as the seen text, it will be compared with an unseen text, which is likely to be another film marketing example. Topics to compare could include: representation of gender, ethnicity, age, nationality or messages and values.

LAYOUT & DESIGN & WRITTEN LANGUAGE

There is a **high text-to-image ratio** on the front page of the **broadsheet**. This aligns with the professional readership for the paper, who engage with **hard news** content and extensive **copy** with specialist terminology. The **ABCI demographic** for the paper have the need for knowledge and education on political topics alongside **high-brow soft news** content (such as satirical TV shows – Brooklyn Nine-Nine, The Office, The IT Crowd, and references to concept artists such as Warhol and wine connoisseurship), all featuring in the **blue skybox**.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

The **masthead/flag** "The Guardian" is formatted in white **serif typography** inside a **blue skybox**... reinforces the professional, upmarket **ABCI demographic** for the newspaper. The 2018 redesign from new **editor-in-chief**, Katherine Viner, switched the **broadsheet** size from Berliner to a **tabloid-sized** format. The **serif font** is 'Guardian Headline' (created by Commercial Type) and accompanying 'Guardian Egyptian' **copy** reintroduces the uppercase 'T' and 'G' to emphasise the paper's formal approach.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

- The **main headline**, 'Cummings accuses PM of lying over No 10 party' uses **powerful verbs** 'accuses' and "lying" for emotive impact. Cummings is Boris' former (fired) chief advisor, who retaliates that Boris has broken ministerial code.
- The fact that the PM is accused of this is significant, and The Guardian's platforming of this as **headline news** meets the **news values** of **Conflict** and **Impact**.
- The word 'party' serves to reinforce Johnson's clownlike appearance in the image and thematically ties in with the **skybox** feature about missing parties, implying the public have followed the rules whilst Boris, Conservative MPs and colleagues have not.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

- The **headlines** across the frontpage are focused, factual, and unemotional, in line with the **objective** reporting style of the majority of broadsheets.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

- The theme of Conservative dishonesty continues in the **heading** 'Inquiry launched into Mone over VIP Lane deal' which highlights an investigation into a Conservative peer and a PPE corruption scandal during the pandemic.
- The Guardian construct a reality of Conservative dishonesty in line with **left-wing values**.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

- The **skybox** is used to reference the G2 **supplement**, which is a regular segment in the paper, and most visible on newsstands – the content is 'soft news' as a lighter alternative to 'hard news' political content.
- The **secondary lead** in the **skybox** "What we miss about working in the office" with a montage of images from TV shows (Brooklyn Nine-Nine, The Office, The IT Crowd) refers to the 'work from home' culture post-pandemic.
- The use of the **collective pronoun** 'we' suggests that The Guardian see the majority of its readership as **white-collar workers (ABCI)**, as opposed to The Sun's readership of **blue-collar workers (C2DE)**.

Representation Questions

- The way people have been portrayed – gender, ethnicity, age, class, culture etc.
- Feminist theories on representation.
- How media language can communicate representations.
- How context (social, historical, production) can inform representations.
- How the selection and combination of codes and conventions reveals the producer's intentions in how to represent groups and individuals.
- Under-representation/ misrepresentation – which groups are unfairly portrayed.
- Stereotypes – why have they been used and how have these stereotypes changed?
- The messages and values communicated through representation.
- Audience response to representation.