



A method for doing a question on media studies

Sample answer to media studies 2006. Question 1 (a)

Examine carefully the advertisement that appears on Page 2 of Paper X, which accompanies this examination paper.

1. (a) This advertisement - for the 1999 National Ploughing Championships - provides the reader with very little written text. Much of what the advertisers want to communicate is conveyed visually. What do you think is communicated about the event by the picture?



National Ploughing Championships - Machinery & Livestock Exhibition 28-30 September 1999
Castletownroche Mallow Cork.

Markers will reward students who deal with the physical details in the picture and link them to the event mentioned in the caption. Creative, individual responses will be rewarded.

Some advice on how to approach this type of question

This question calls for you to examine the picture and look for anything in it that you can connect to the event mentioned in the caption. The question is stated in a lengthy way on the paper. A lot of the question is merely giving you information to help you. The key phrase from the question that tells you your task contains the words '**communicated visually**'. Keep this in mind when answering.

You have to say what the picture communicates about the National Ploughing Championship of 1999.



Here are some basic tips about exploring a visual text:

References to colour, varying texture, lines and close-up details will be rewarded. In a mid-shot or long shot it is useful to identify focal point of the picture, to distinguish foreground from background, left from right etc.

How to do the question

USE ANYTHING YOU SEE IN THE PICTURE. DESCRIBE IT WELL IN YOUR OWN WORDS. RELATE WHAT YOU SEE TO PLOUGING FIELDS IN A NATIONAL COMPETITION.

Here's A Sample Answer to 1. (A)

- First of all, it is the caption below the picture that informs us of the event associated with the picture. This event is the National Ploughing Championships.
- The viewer is meant to regard the forehead as a field.
- The forehead looks as if it is ploughed because the man's wrinkles are deep and straight like in a ploughed field. His forehead reminds us of the drills that are at the centre of the event.
- The close-up of the cap actually looks like a corn-field. This is only indirectly related to the competition, though a cornfield can only happen as a result of ploughing.
- The eyebrows look like a ditch and the gap between looks like the entrance to a field. This reminds us of the event being advertised.
- The photo shows an old farmer and you might see him at the ploughing championship. Or maybe he is a ploughing judge.
- The forehead suggests an interesting character or personality, such as you might meet at the event.
- The eyelid on the lower left is like another field, maybe a potato field, a field that requires ploughing.
- The forehead reminds me of a scarecrow on a ploughed field.
- From another point of view, the cap reminds me of a double wall outside a field, maybe to keep animals in when the field is not ploughed.