



Lesson objective:

To develop your ability to use semiotics to analyse visual codes in media texts.

Semiotics

The study of signs.



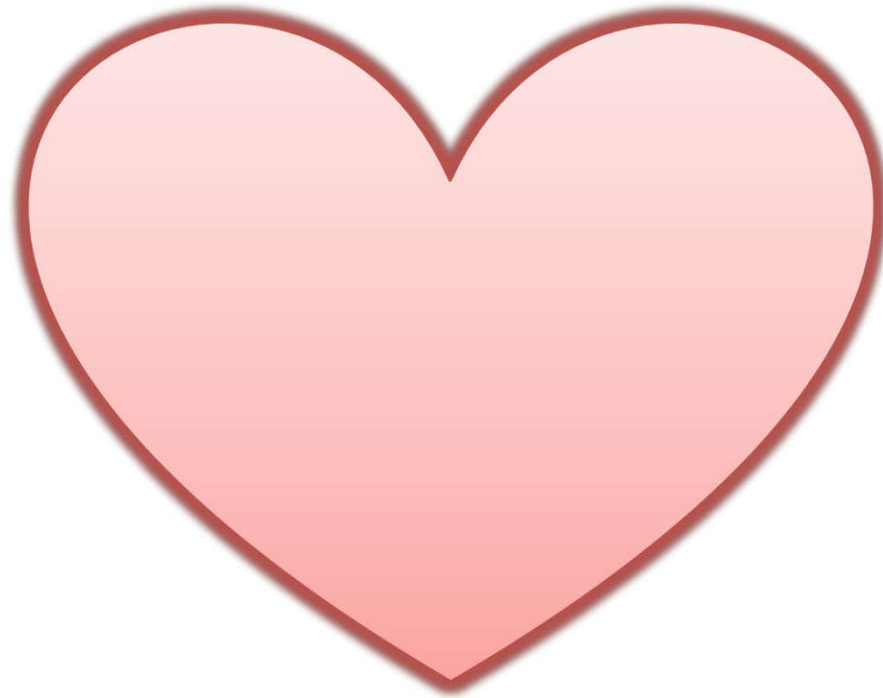
Semiotics

The theory of signs. From the Greek *semeiotikos*, which means “an interpreter of signs.” Signing is vital to human existence because it underlies all forms of communication. Within semiotics, anything that is used for human communication is defined as a sign: gestures, facial expressions, poetry, rituals, clothes, food, music, morse code, marketing, commercials, film, etc.





Think about a heart.



Write down words/phrases/ideas associated with it

Blood

Pump

Muscle

Life

Red

Emotions

Feeling

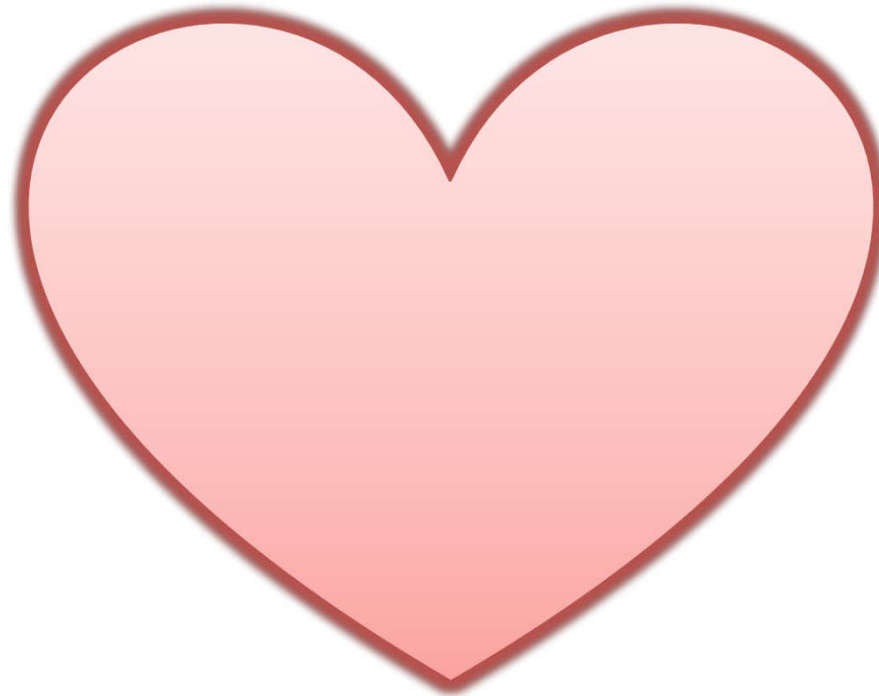
Strength

Body

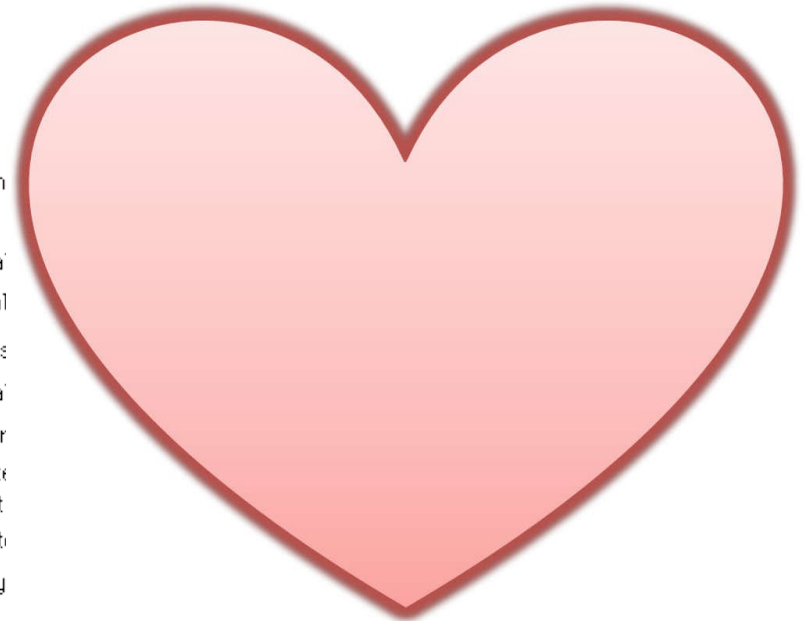
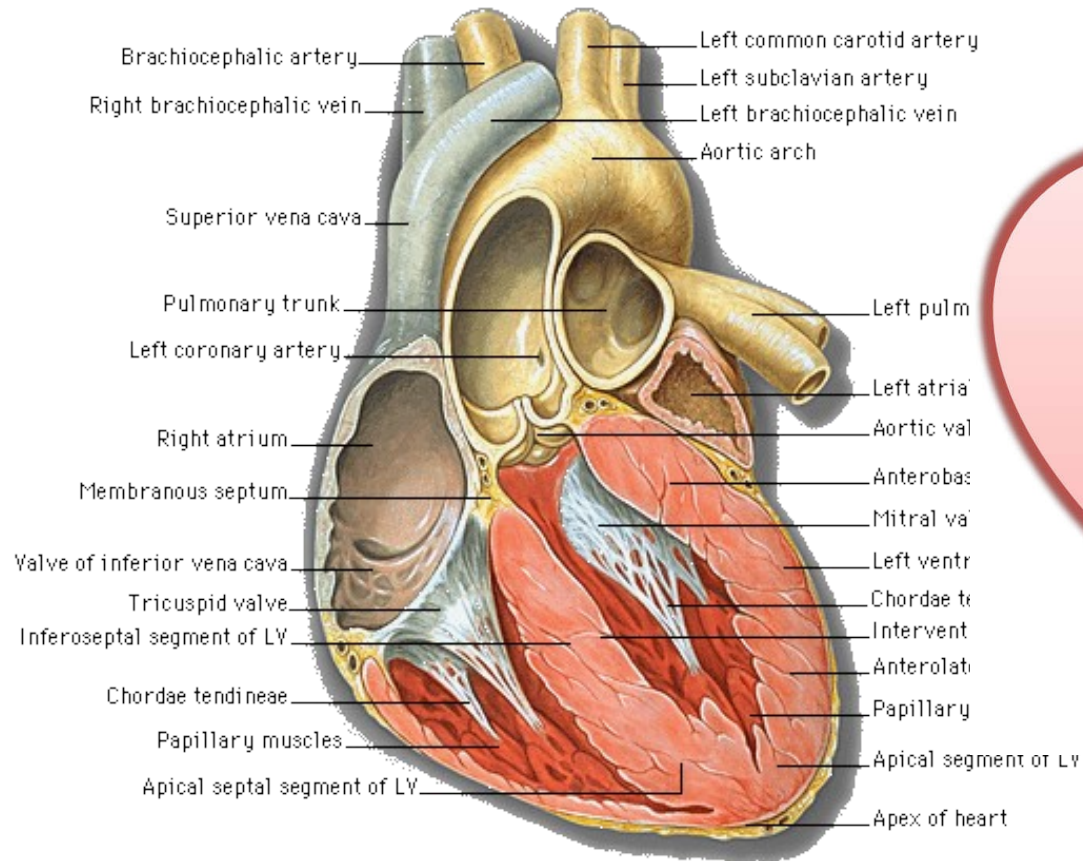
Love

Centre

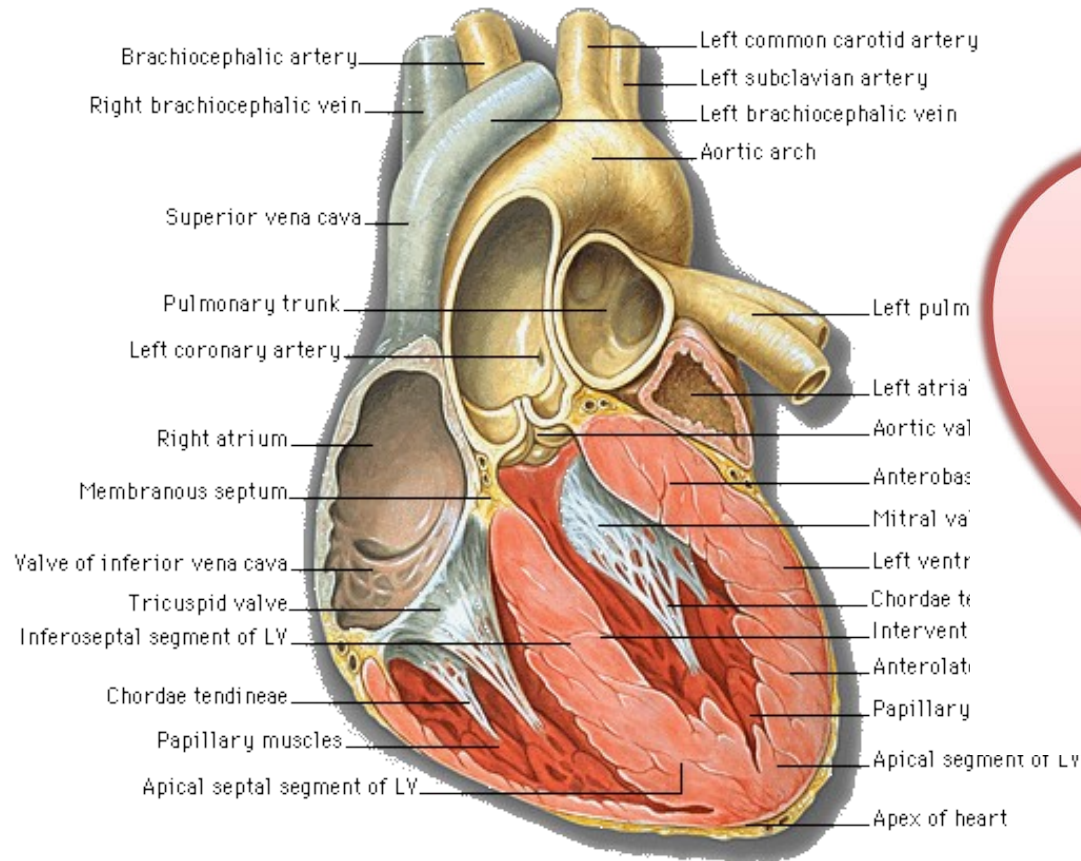
Care



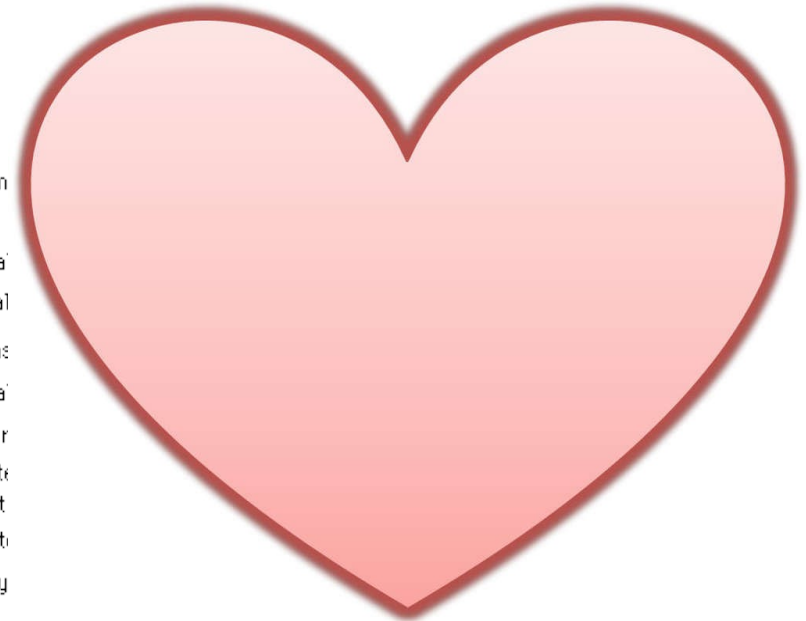
But what are we actually thinking about?



Sort your words/phrases out into *literal* associations (actually referring to the heart) and *connotations* (referring to the idea of the heart – what the heart represents)



Denotation



Connotation

Heart

Denotations

Connotations

Heart

Denotations

e.g. muscle

Connotations

Heart

Denotations

e.g. muscle

Connotations

e.g. love

Heart

Denotations

e.g. muscle

Pump

Blood

Organ

Body

Connotations

e.g. love

Heart

Denotations

e.g. muscle

Pump

Blood

Organ

Body

Connotations

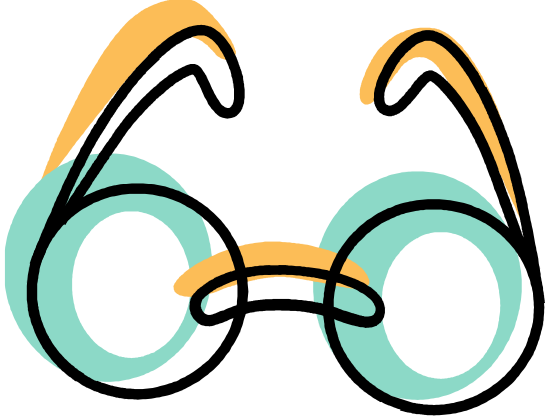
e.g. love

Valentines

Feelings

Romance

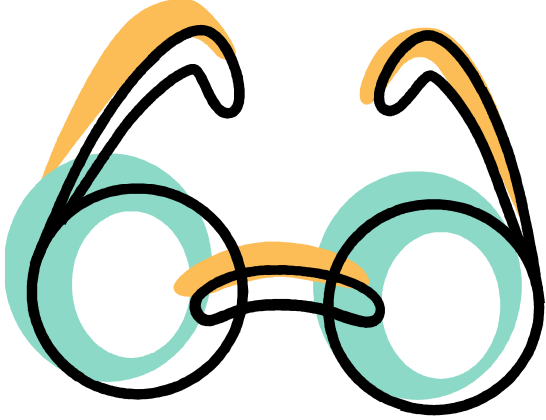
Sweet



Denotations

Spectacles/Glasses

Connotations



Spectacles/Glasses

Denotations

Sight/Vision

Optometry

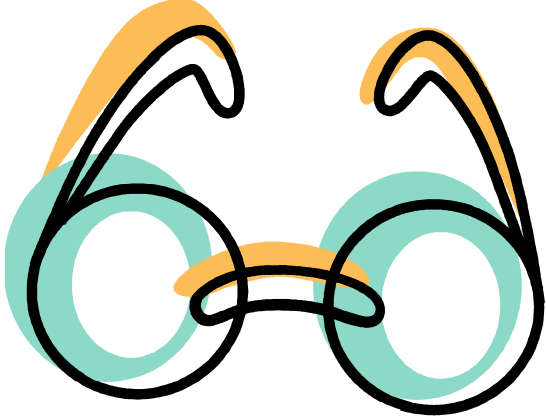
Eyes

Long/short sighted

Lenses

Glass

Connotations



Spectacles/Glasses

Denotations

Sight/Vision

Optometry

Eyes

Long/short sighted

Lenses

Glass

Connotations

Intelligence

Scientist

Teacher

‘Boffin’

Physical weakness



The Scented Salamander

a new fragrance
Calvin Klein



THE ULTIMATE SLAY RIDE



FROM THE MAKERS OF "FINAL DESTINATION"

BLACK CHRISTMAS

PRODUCED BY JEFF PUNYON WRITTEN BY JOHN PERRY DIRECTED BY JOHN DAHLER
CASTING BY JAMES HARRISON COSTUME DESIGNER JAMES HARRISON HAIR DESIGNER JAMES HARRISON
MAKEUP DESIGNER JAMES HARRISON EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JAMES HARRISON JAMES HARRISON
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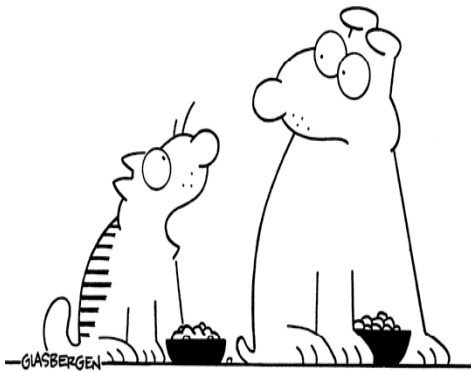
WWW.BLACKCHRISTMASMOVIE.CO.UK

THIS DECEMBER TERROR IS COMING HOME

Icon

The signifier (denotation) is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified (connotation). A pictorial representation, a photograph, an architect's model of a building, or a star chart are all icons because they imitate or copy aspects of their subject.

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www.glasbergen.com



"The vet says i need a hobby. I thought eating and sleeping were my hobbies!"



Index

An index has a factual or casual connection that points towards its object. Wet streets are a sign that it has rained recently. Smoke signifies fire. A nest image is an icon of a nest but also an index of a bird.



Symbol

A symbol has an arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified. The interpreter understands the symbol through previous knowledge and experience—it must be learned and agreed upon. Spoken or written words are symbols. There is no reason that the word CAT should represent a cat instead of a tree.

CAT

Metasymbol

A symbol whose meaning transcends the tangible realm of simple one-to-one relationships. History, culture, and tradition all play a role in creating metasymbols, such as the dove with an olive branch as a symbol for peace. For certain audiences, religious and magical signs and symbols take on these properties.

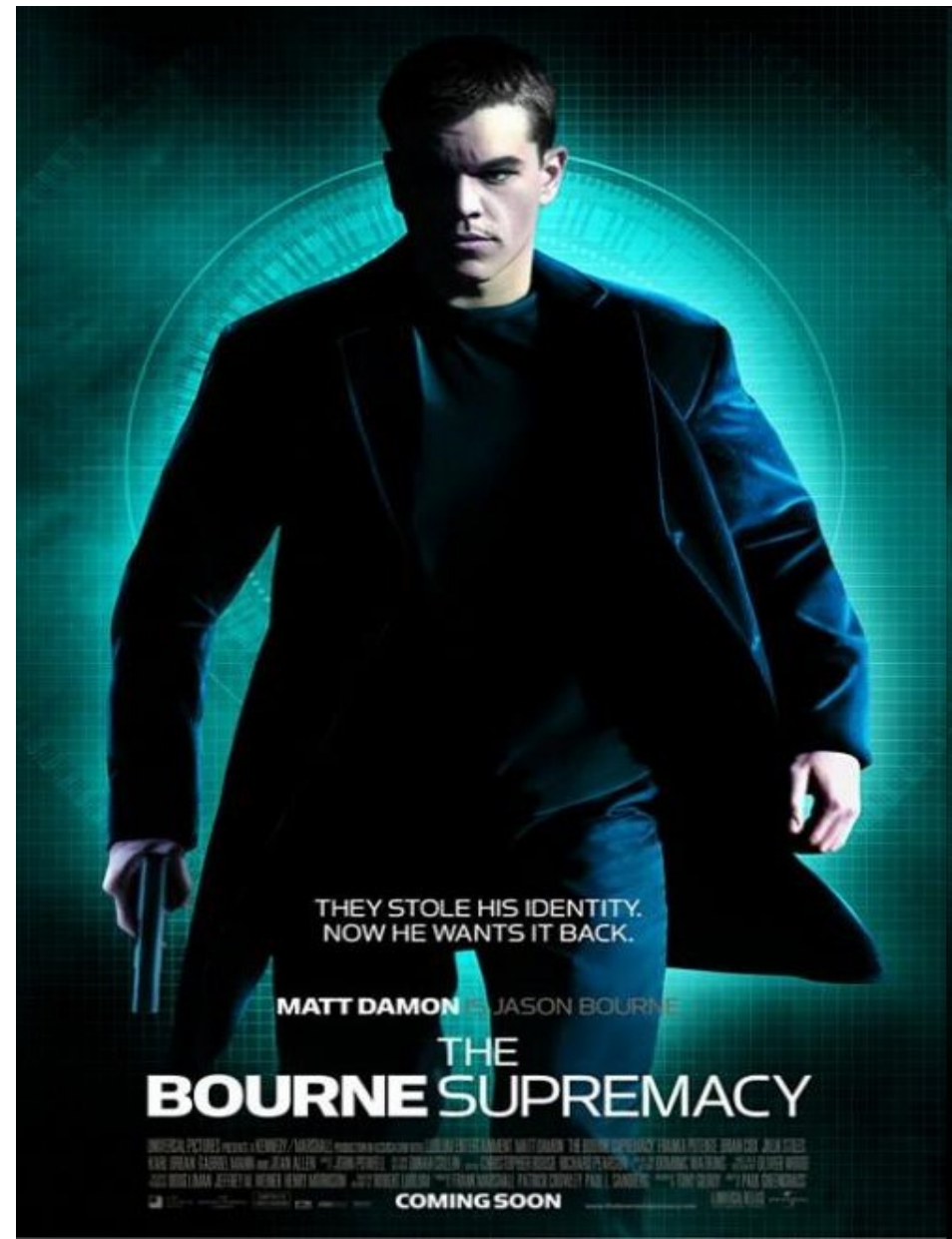


Understanding visual codes in printed media texts

Denotation (signifier)

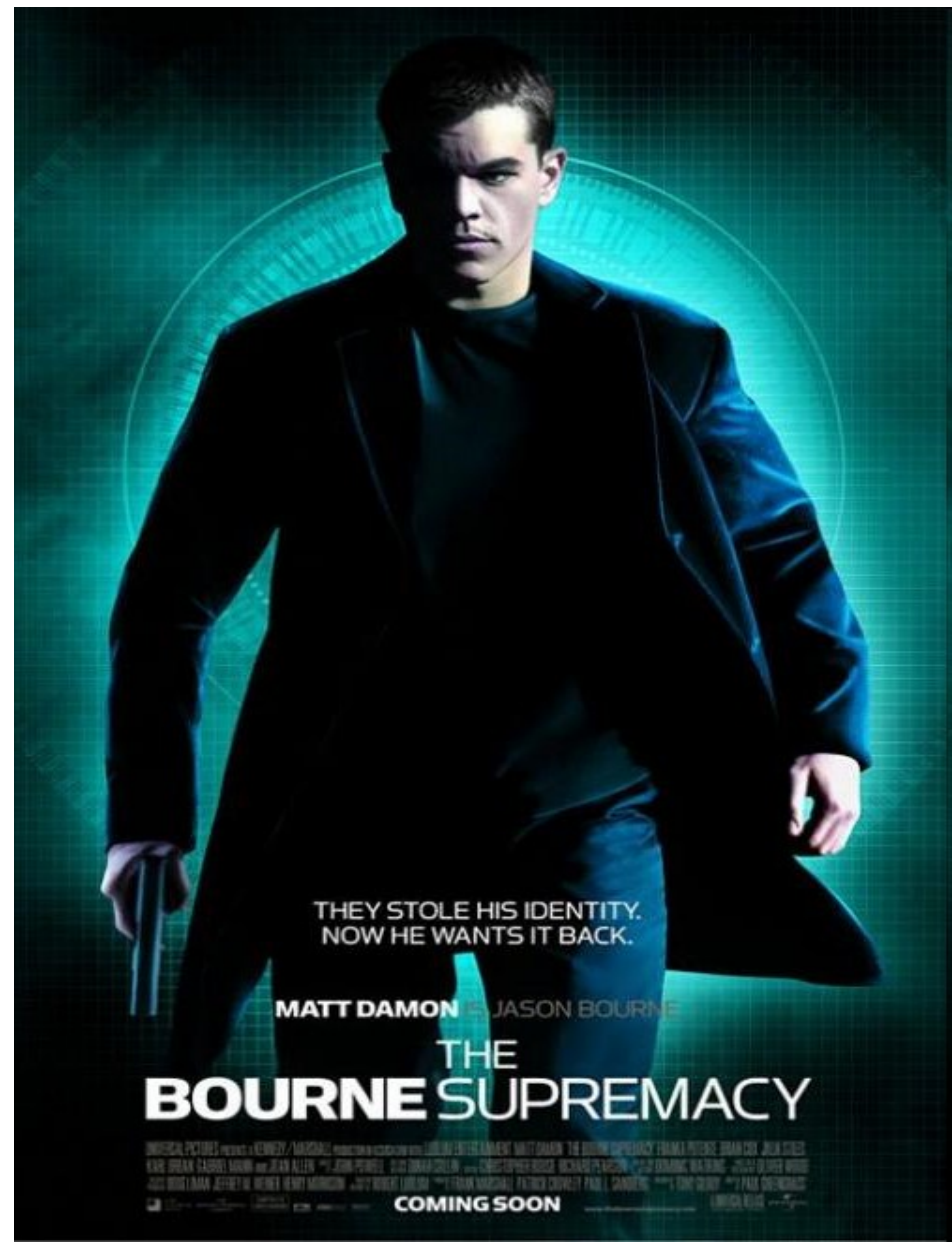
Connotation (signified)

List the similarities in the denotation of these posters (focus on the **image**). Think about *lighting*, *posing*, *costume*, *props* etc.



Genre Tropes (or ‘Codes’)

A common pattern, theme, or motif within the genre (e.g. a spaceship in science fiction films)



QUESTION

How does this poster use visual codes (colour, lighting etc.) to communicate and appeal to its target audience?



1. Identify the technique.

e.g.

The text uses lights surrounding Bond.



2. What is the effect?

e.g.

The text uses lights surrounding Bond to make him look angelic; as if he on the side of good.



To get to the higher marks...

this creates the impression that

this suggests

this implies

this symbolises

this connotes

3. What is the effect on the audience?

e.g.

The text uses white lights surrounding Bond to symbolise angels' wings, making him look heroic, and suggesting to the audience that he is on the side of good.



4. What else could it symbolise?

e.g.

The text uses white lights surrounding Bond to symbolise angels' wings, making him look heroic, and suggesting to the audience that he is on the side of good. It could also imply that he is godly or 'other worldly' in that he has powers above the average male.



5. Consider an alternative viewpoint.

e.g.

The text uses white lights surrounding Bond to symbolise angels' wings, making him look heroic, and suggesting to the audience that he is on the side of good. It could also imply that he is godly or 'other worldly' in that he has powers above the average male.

However, the shadow could suggest a darker side.



QUESTION

How does this poster use visual codes (colour, lighting etc.) to communicate and appeal to its target audience?

- T** What is the technique?
- E** What is the effect?
- A** What is the effect on the audience?
- S** What else could it symbolise?
- A** Consider an alternative viewpoint.



T	What is the technique?
E	What is the effect?
A	What is the effect on the audience?
S	What else could it symbolise?
A	Consider an alternative viewpoint.



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What have you learned?

- Terminology/Vocabulary
- Phrases for analysis
- How to get a higher mark in your response