

# Media film poster analysis assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Analyse 4 film posters, one from each genre discussed in your groups, commenting on: ??? Visual Codes ??? Layout and Design ??? Language ??? Significance and Effects on the Audience Film Posters are an important part in promoting films because they give the audience an insight into the film and give them an idea of what to expect. They are a vital aspect of film promotions as they are high profile and attract the audience because it is a major form of visual advertisement.

When analysing film posters you notice that they follow certain codes and conventions within their specific genre of film. Within my essay I am going to be analysing the codes and conventions of four genre film posters which are horror, animation, comedy and action. My chosen horror poster is 'The Grudge', for animation I chose 'Toy Story 3' and within comedy I chose 'The Hangover' and finally for action I chose 'Crank'; all of my chosen films are iconic to that specific genre.

Action film posters usually follow specific codes and conventions, especially within their visual codes. Dark colours are commonly used but with hues of red or orange colours, this helps imply danger and blood within the film.

Within my chosen action poster 'Crank' its main colour is black which portrays the characters dark times ahead in the film, however it also has the use of reds and oranges which gives the audience the representation of blood, fire and danger.

This has a significant affect on the audience because it shows them a brief but strong image of what to expect in the film overall because it sets the tone of the film. The key image is usually mid action shots of the main

character holding a gun, as shown in my action poster ‘Crank’ with Jason Statham holding a gun; this signifies action because immediately the audience think the use of guns is going to be common factor within the film, this is an example of iconography.

The foreground image also follows codes and conventions because it shows action, in my case helicopters, fire and police cars; this image is typical of the genre because it connotes explosive action within the film, immediately creating suspense. There are also many signifiers because the gun and the fire connote the film genre and pose a narrative enigma. Another iconic part of the poster is the use of Jason Statham because he is iconic to action films so this also has a significant effect on the audience because they automatically know it’s an action film.

Also the image of his character on the film poster signals a very strong presence, as the picture is a low angle image which makes the characters look and seem bigger and portrays power; this has a significant effect on the audience because they want the them to experience the character’s presence through one image, and in my opinion they do this. The overall poster depicts a typically male audience with its use of colours, imagery, chosen fonts and its chosen genre is stereotyped to a male audience.

The font chosen within the poster also has effect; it is a bold, sharp cornered font which represents the film as a whole, with the action being bold, big and explosive. Typically most action film posters have their film title in capital letters to make the audience remember the film title, the block capitals could

also represent the action within the film, bold and big which would give the audience the idea that they are to expect plenty of action.

The busy layout of the poster also represents this because in every aspect of the poster there is something going on; in my poster Crank you have fire, police cars, helicopters, the main character, a gun and a bold central title. In other action posters this is also common to have a busy structure because if the poster was just all one colour with no forms of actions (guns, blood, vehicles) the audience wouldn't feel the same suspense and excitement as they would from another action poster with a busy layout, so the layout has a significant effect upon the audience.

Another important part of an action poster is the tag lines included because they leave the overall message of the film. On my action poster, Crank, the tag line is ' Poison in his veins. Vengeance in his heart. ' This tagline connects to the image used in the main character's heart on the poster, as they have used an image of a heart in a fire related colour and needles stabbing through it to portray the poison.

This tagline is affective because the use of the words ' poison' and ' vengeance' show the audience that there is going to be punishment inflicted and Jason Statham is going to be involved in plenty of danger, which is what the audience want. Overall the poster is very affective to the audience by using specific codes and conventions it manages to create the suspense and thrill of the action film and set an overall tone. Animation film posters also follow specific codes and conventions to promote and advertise its film; my chosen animation film poster was ' Toy Story 3' which is a Disney film.

Disney's target audience are always aimed at families with children, each Disney film has a moral and aims to teach children that good always wins over evil, so aspects of this moral will be portrayed through their film poster. A major part of all animation film posters is their use of colour, they tend to follow specific visual codes within their choices; usual colours tend to be blue, yellow, light green, and red, all bright visual colours that appeal to both boys and girls.

The choice of the colour blue is significant because it represents innocence so it is commonly for the characters that are the 'good' within the film, this helps the younger audience relate to the character before even watching the film. Colour is also used effectively for the younger audience so they can automatically recognise the good and bad characters; generally on animation film posters the evil characters usually have dark coloured clothes or are against a dark background, whilst the good are against a bright background and are wearing bright colours.

My chosen film poster follows this code and convention as the main iconic characters are all wearing bright coloured costumes and are against a bright coloured background, this has effect on the audience because the younger people will immediately know the characters are the 'good' within the film and create a bond with them already. The use of bright colours also helps engage the younger audience's eye much more than a dull-coloured poster as younger people are visually impaired. The use of bright colours also sets the tone of the film.

Within the character images emotion is also a code used to have effect upon the audience, on my chosen film poster the emotion shown is innocence but in a humoured way, they have used this because it makes the character's look scared but in a light-hearted way, shown in 'Woody's' body positioning, he looks scared and rather awkward which would come across as funny to the younger audience. Also the raised eyebrow of 'Buzzlightyear' shows humour, this has effect on the audience because it portrays a comedy element within the film and engages them to want to see more.

Another code always used in animation film posters is the specific character forms chosen, you will notice that all animation characters tend to be either animals, toy figures or fantasy figures this is because they appeal to children's imaginations rather than using human actors or actresses; this has significant effects because it makes the children connect to the film much more as all children love role play and creating things with their imagination, so the use of toys and animals coming to life engages them dramatically.

One convention of animation film posters is their structure/layout; most posters seem to follow the same layout with there being one main image that includes a central position of the main characters, the film title positioned centrally at the bottom, and the tagline featured at the top of the poster. My film poster 'Toy Story' uses this code and convention and it has effect because the use of the main central and non-threatening image makes the characters stand out and attracts the target audience.

On my chosen film poster what I think is most effective is the use of colour and facial expression within the characters, I feel this is the most effective

part of the poster because it links to the target audience really well by using bright visual colours centrally and keeping muted colours as the main background colour, this helps the characters stand out and attracts the target audience with the iconic figures.

The emotion in the characters is also effective because its almost like a ‘hook’ it hooks the audience in and makes them think what are the characters so surprised at and what are they breaking out from, immediately making the younger people wanting to watch the film. Horror film posters are very iconic in how they use codes and conventions to attracts their target audience and create effect. I chose to analyse the horror film poster of ‘The Grudge’ because it’s a very famous horror and has a simple yet effective poster.

The title of the film is very significant because it is named ‘The Grudge’ and the word grudge means, a persistent feeling off ill resentment resulting from a past incident, so by using the word grudge it immediately creates horror and suspense towards the audience. The positioning of the title on my poster follows a common code and convention of horror posters because most are positioned either centrally or towards the bottom, they choose to do this because usually people are engaged more to the central focus of the poster so the title of the film will be remembered more to the audience.

The colour and font chosen also follows codes and conventions of horror posters because it is in a bold, capital text and is a red colour with a blood effect. This is a popular choice within horror poster because by using the bold text the audiences eye’s are drawn immediately to the title; the colour

also has effect because it creates equilibrium and strikes danger by using the colour of red and portraying danger and blood, this immediately creates suspense and tension within the audience.

Another visual code used within most horror film posters like my chosen one is that the victim featured on the poster is typically a woman to imply innocence and more fear, this has effect because the audience will feel a major emotion of fear for the female character, and will become tense and intrigued to know what happens to them. However, this can also be implied as a form of male gaze with the women always being the victim to the evil character within the film. Almost all images used within horror posters is one main central image of the villain or the victim, they do this automatically strike fear and set the tone of the overall film.

Also within the image, another common factor is the use of close-up shots within the victim/villain's faces to either portray the fear within the victims face or the horror and evil within the villain's emotion. Also a key factor is some film posters', including mine is that the horror posters focus on the eyes of the characters because eyes are they key to emotion within the character and can show or immediately create fear. Another key feature that is always used in horror film posters is the colour themes; within horror posters the colours always tend to be dark, dull muted colours with bursts of red in violent forms i. . blood. The use of dark colours connects to the overall genre 'horror' as people are scared of the dark, so it immediately creates fear. Also by using the colour red it has the same intended effect as action posters by creating danger, tension and suspense. One part of the layout within horror posters that always remains the same is that the film



information such as the director's names etc. are always featured at the bottom in smaller writing, they do this so that the audience's attention is mainly on the film title and image.

Overall on my chosen film poster 'The Grudge' what I think works best is the image and the colour theme; I think these have most effect because within the image it is a close-up on a female's face and all of her facial body parts are covered with dark, black hair and the only part of her face uncovered is her eye and immediately you can see the fear in her eye as it is very wide and is all one colour. This will make the audience feel uneasy and tense to what has startled and scared her so they will be intrigued to know what it is that is so haunting.

The colour theme has such effect because it does follow the typical horror code and convention so the audience know it is a horror film, and it also helps the audience remember the film title because it is the only part of the poster that is in colour. The last genre of film posters I am analysing is comedy, and the film poster I have chosen to analyse is 'The Hangover'. Again like my chosen horror poster the title of the film is significant to the genre of the film, as immediately the audience can relate the overall film title to the comedy element of the film.

This is also a code and convention of most comedy film posters as they all tend to have a funny title and usually is a pun. My film poster title has effects upon the audience because immediately it plays to the audience's imaginations, because they will automatically begin to wonder 'what happened the night before?', 'why do they have a hangover?' so they are

drawn into the film already. The titles also generally tend to be simple titles like horror so that they can be remembered.

Positioning of the title is also alike the other three genres I have analysed and typically tends to be positioned at the bottom of the poster beneath the main central image and in bold capitals, this is so the main attention of the audience is at the title of the film and the main image; this has effect because the title of the film is visually remembered through the use of colour and layout. The imaging within comedy posters also has significance, they usually tend to be of the main characters but in a comedic element, this is also shown in my chosen poster.

The images on 'The Hangover' poster are of three of the main characters and each show different but comedic emotions and elements from the film. One of the characters is shown with a missing tooth, and a frowned expression, another character is shown with scratch marks down his neck and a busted lip and the final other character is shown carrying a baby with sunglasses on; automatically the audience will find this humorous and start to question the actions of the characters i. . ' why would a man with a hangover be carrying a baby with sunglasses on? ', ' why is a geeky character missing a tooth? ' and ' why does one character look like he's been attacked? ', so the images help drag the audience into the film's storyline as they want to know more. The positioning of the images also follows the typical code and convention of comedy film poster's layout, as the main image is always centrally based, so the audiences' eyes are immediately drawn towards it.

Comedy posters also always feature a tagline that's not always a direct link to the movie; this is also included on my chosen film poster. The pun/tagline included on the ' Hangover' film poster states ' Some Guys Just Can't Handle Vegas' this is effective because even though it isn't directly linked to the film title it's still linked to the comedy genre.

Also it by using ' Vegas' within the film poster people automatically assume the actions in the film are going to be wild as it may follow the old saying of ' what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas' , so the characters action shown through the visual images can be linked to the pun sub-heading. The background lighting colouring effect can also be linked to the theme of Vegas as it can be connected to the Las Vegas walkway, and the show lighting.