CRITICAL REFLECTION PLANNING TEMPLATE

In this **Critical Reflection essay**, you do not need to explain the theories in detail – merely reference the key concept terms and credit the theorist who coined the term when you are outlining the specific examples from the text.

The important aspect is to have **pertinent and specific examples** from the texts i.e. scenes, shots, colours, fonts, images, edits, FX, social media page content… etc.

You should aim to have **at least 2 different examples** for each question that you could illustrate with **different screen shots** as visual evidence.

This is the full theory booklet.

The shortened glossary for reference

You have used all of these concepts in your work – now you need to be able to use them in specific contexts.

1. *How do your products represent social groups or issues?*
2. *How did your research inform your products and the way they use or challenge conventions?*
3. *How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'?*
4. *How do your products engage with the audience?*

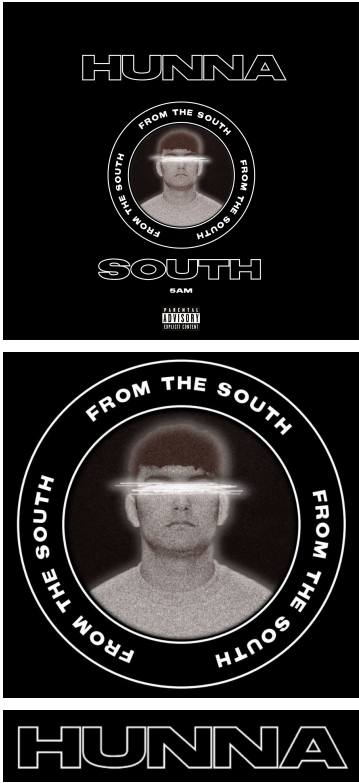Read the examples below and then complete your own ideas in the first table..

You should aim to **credit the theorists** when using key terms and most importantly – you need specific examples from the texts to illustrate your argument and responses.

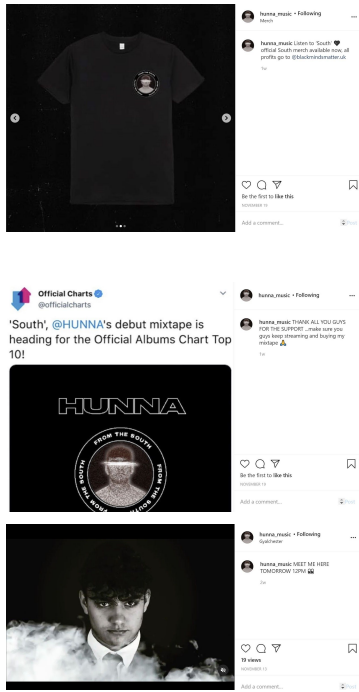| PRODUCT	QUESTION	THEORY/TERMS	Theory – how can be applied – Key terms	EXAMPLE AND IMPACT	Screenshot of a relevant moment x 2
MUSIC VIDEO @ 250 – 300 words	*How did your research inform your products and the way they use or challenge conventions?*	Genre Blueprint/Contract/Label – Altman Repertoire of Elements – Lacey	[1] Understanding the repertoire of elements and how we followed it. In Lacey's theory he says there is a repertoire of elements that each genre has, almost like an ingredients list of what goes into each genre. [2] Rick Altman theorised that each genre follows a blueprint/convention but there are ways that these conventions are challenged or followed.	The first screenshot is from our music video, I think this shows a moment where we have taken the rap genre and changed things about it to fit our theme (our theme being classic gangster movies). In our music video and this screenshot, we have challenged these elements. Rap videos typically have a threatening demeanor, this is often shown through a display of 'weapons'. In these modern rap videos they use guns and sometimes dogs as this sort of 'threatening' feature of the video, I watched many different rap videos with this convention but more specifically YBN Nahmir's 'Rubbin Off The Paint', this music video has repetitive use of guns throughout the entire video. We kept the convention but slightly challenged it to fit with our theme by having our star hold a more 'old school' weapon, the bat.	

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[1]

[2]

				Ideology, Conventions, use, challenge must include.	
DP @ 250 – 300 words	*How do your products represent social groups or issues?*	Representation Barthes – symbolic/semic/cultural Semic code – Unit of meaning/contributes to meaning. Can't give the entire meaning by itself, adds to what there already is. Cultural code – Learnt through our culture. Symbolic code – Visual metaphor. Star Image – Dyer – ordinary, extraordinary, present, absent	Dyer – How our star has been built up to show the audience the difference between the star and them, and how the star is of more 'importance'. (Absence and Presence, Ordinary and Extraordinary.) Barthes – How we have used the 3 different codes (semic, cultural, symbolic.) Eye Scratch and font used on 'Hunna'. (symbolic and semic).	The scratch over the star's eye gives off a symbolic coding, the image itself already looks like a mugshot then with the scratch over the eyes added it is dehumanising/impersonal to the star. The scratch represents the social issue of people who have been unfairly treated in criminal justice. The dehumanising feel of this is what primarily represents this social issue, seeing the star in this situation almost makes him feel like he's just another person you know. Where in reality he is completely absent from the audience's lives and doesn't know who they are. Our star is represented as an ordinary person, nothing about the picture of him is completely out of the ordinary. He's wearing normal clothes, has a normal background. Although the star is given a symbolic coding where he is put right in the center inside of a big circle border. This shows that he is of importance here and the attention should be on him, it shows him as better than everyone else. We have also represented our star this way on the digipak, which is differently to the other parts of our multimedia package, as we wanted to show our 'star' and not how our star was changed to fit the theme.	

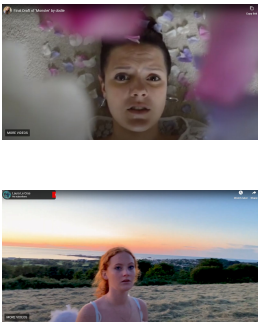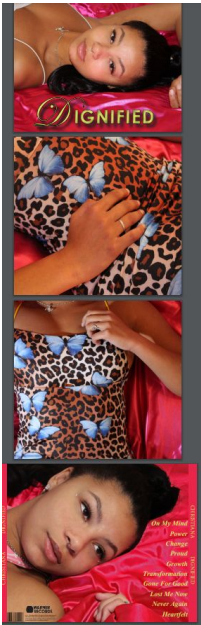| SMP @ 250 – 300 words | *How do your products engage with the audience?* | Audience theory
B + K – social interaction, personal identity, entertainment, information

AIDA – Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. | B&K – How the audience can use our social media page in the sense of the 4 components of B&K (Information, Entertainment, Social interaction and Personal identity.) | (First screenshot)
The audience can buy and use this merch to identify themselves to our star. Having a shirt with the stars face on it is just about the furthest you can go to identify yourself with the star. It represents their love for the star and music, I think this also is a part of social interaction, if another fan of the same artist sees this person wearing this merch they're most likely going to strike a conversation as they both have something in common.

(Second and third screenshot)
If someone is just scrolling through their social media feed and sees this big picture of an album cover posted by the official charts, the combination of the album cover and post by the official charts is going to grab the consumers attention. Once the audience's attention has been captured they're going to read more and see that it is now in the top 10, this is where they become interested and will actually go and listen to this album. If the person enjoys the music they could have the desire to listen to more music by this artist and then they'll act on this desire and either buy the song, stream on Spotify, etc. Once the audience has done this the full 'cycle' of AIDA is complete and the artist will have a new fan/listener, which was all kickstarted by the initial attention grab from a tweet. This process would also happen with the post with the smoke, the only difference would be the attention grab. The consumer would see this person with smoke waving around in front of them and they will definitely wonder what it is all about and their attention is captured. | |

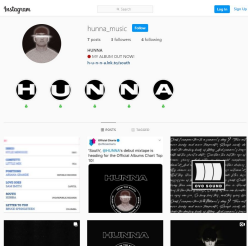| All (this will become your introduction) @ 250 – 300 words | How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'? | Hall – encode, decode, preferred reading, oppositional, demographics, psychographics. | Promoting the values, attitudes and beliefs (ideologies) and how the audience identify themselves with this anti establishments/verging illegal message (typical of the genre). | Our star is represented in a consistent way across all three elements of the multimedia package. In most pieces of media he's in he is seen wearing the suit and tie,the costume our star is wearing is to encode an anti authority, political and rebellious message in him. This message is also encoded in our star through his facial expression, especially in the second screenshot, where he is looking directly at the camera with a sinister/violent expression. It is very clear by his expression that he's angry and looks as if he wants to do something about it. Another way the same message was encoded in our star (in the third screenshot), our star is stood with a baseball bat over his shoulder. The audience can easily decode that he doesn't have the bat to play a sport. In hand with the other ways we've encoded this anti-establishment message into our star, the audience can easily decode that he has the bat for violence. This juxtaposes with the smart business wear our star is outfitted in, which gives a more gangster feel to the violence. | |
			How we have encoded a brand within our star and this is decoded to our audience. (Consistency/Motif).		
		Producer's Ideology (Encodes) / Audience's Ideology (Decodes)		We use a consistent black and white colour palette throughout all three pieces of this multimedia package, the colour palette encodes the classic gangster style into our star and a message of anti authority/establishment. We kept consistent with our colour palette to always be portraying this image, if we have only used it once or twice our message wouldn't have been properly encoded.	
				Colour palette is B&W, which is consistent across the products and attempts to encode a sense of classic gangster style, with youth attitudes.	

CRITICAL REFLECTION PLANNING TEMPLATE

Completed Example

PRODUCT	QUESTION	THEORY/TERMS	INTRO	EXAMPLE AND IMPACT	Screen Shot of a relevant moment x 2
MUSIC VIDEO @ 250 – 300 words	*How did your research inform your products and the way they use or challenge conventions?*	Genre Blueprint/Contract/Label – Altman Repertoire of Elements – Lacey	We researched professional punk music videos and understood quite quickly that they were largely performance videos with live, and aggressively edited footage and also used conventional MES of ripped costumes, studs, dark eye makeup and neon mohican hairstyles. In particular we watched one by XXXX and decided to use some of the generic conventions of MES like the low key lighting to connote a nihilistic and anarchic feel along with ripped t-shirts and safety pins as accessories. All of these elements are what Lacey would call the repertoire of elements – those expected ingredients that our target audience would expect to see. And Altman would argue, is the blueprint for a successful and conventionally recognisable punk music video.	However, in our production I decided to develop and challenge those conventions. Instead of a purely performance based video we added in a narrative. Whilst this was not part of the blueprint which the audience would expect, we felt that a suitably filmed and styled narrative could fit the expectations of the audience and the contract, as Altman suggests, would be fulfilled. We used a narrative showing a young punk antagonist navigating his life around daily chores, laborious, tedious and disheartening and he broke out of his humdrum life to join a band and liberate himself from the monotony of his life. It was filmed using documentary style footage, hand held and shaky so that his life was represented as authentic and organic. This style of filming fitted with the generic conventions of the punk genre that is raw, unproduced and visceral.	
DP @ 250 – 300 words	*How do your products represent social groups or issues?*	Representation Barthes – symbolic/semic/cultural Star Image – Dyer – ordinary, extraordinary, present, absent	Representing the star in an authentic way, in all of the products was essential to creating a successful package.

Our star is known for their edgy and anarchic character and as such their metanarrative is one that exposes his dangerous and subversive nature and he clearly evidences the extraordinary aspect of Dyer's paradox of the star, as he displays extreme personalities – one minute rebellious being papped by the paparazzi falling out of a club and the next a caring citizen visiting the elderly in care homes – both of which are evidenced in the social media page. | I wanted to represent him on the DP as a contemplative and thoughtful character though, so developed the conventions of his representation. I photographed him in a soft light, sitting reading a book in a library full of antique books. This represented him as intelligent and intellectual and helped imply a more ordinary side of his star image. It was also a symbolic symbol, as Barthes would say, of his more thoughtful nature. Barthes would argue that this representation though using the semic codes of a soft light and atmospheric location of a library may not be read as such and instead the use of these cultural codes may infer that he is 'boring' to his teenage rebellious fans. | |

SMP @ 250 – 300 words	*How do your products engage with the audience?*	Audience theory Hall – encode, decode, preferred reading, oppositional, demographics, psychographics B + K – social interaction, personal identity, entertainment, information	Engaging the audience is the main aim of any marketing, advertising campaign as without their buy in, the success of any product launch will be minimised. The SMP is full of opportunities to engage the fans of XXXX. As Hall describes, encoding any media text with the expected signs and symbols is imperative in order that the target audience can decode it and 'get' a preferred reading of the text. If the repertoire of elements is 'off-piste' then the audience could reject the text by getting an oppositional reading of it.	As a result, I ensured that the SMP was full of what B and K would argue are essential elements to engage any audience in a media text. For example, there were opportunities to socially interact with other fans and the star himself by the inclusion of a live Twitter chat. There was also a link to a merchandise page that enables the fans to feel part of the 'club' and in particular wear the fashion associated with the star. It was also important that the page had all the relevant information and entertainment for the fans to feel fulfilled so I included tour dates, teasers for the video release and competitions to meet the star backstage. All of these examples of the SMP were directly crafted and produced to maximise hits, clicks, likes, reviews and comments by the target audience. The SMP was also full of photographs, captions, tags, comments that 'spoke' his language - both in literal and visual terms to encourage a preferred reading. For example the ubiquitous filter of 'clarendon' gave a retro and classic cinematic impression - a code that the demographics of the target audience, of older middle class females, would relate to as his genre is ballad based pop.	
All (this will become your introduction) @ 250 – 300 words	*How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'?*	De Saussure – signified, signifier Representation – Star Image – metanarrative, ordinary, extraordinary, present, absent – Dyer Barthes?	A brand needs to be easily recognisable by an audience so a producer must work hard to create a cohesive and blended campaign - the products need to belong to the same 'family'. The mission statement of our artist included key descriptions including 'edgy, compulsive, unpredictable'. All of the products in the package work together to create a cohesive representation of the artist and at various stages and in various way represent him as such across the different texts – de Saussure would describe this as using clear denotations that have relevant connotations – the signifier and the signified – to encourage a preferred reading. They were brought cohesively together in the SMP where it was clear to see the elements that helped create that overall sense of branding.	For example some of the star image that my target audience would expect to see was that overarching idea of his angry and delinquent nature as a rebellious punk star. This was evident in all of the products – a fast paced edit and neon filter in the music video conveyed an edgy punk energy. Meanwhile, in the DP, this was somewhat juxtaposed by symbolically representing him as learned and thoughtful by his contemplative pose in the library. The paradox of the star with him both being ordinary and extraordinary are clear to see in the branding. The semic codes of the thoughtful expression and the cultural code of the setting are all examples of what Barthes would term the narrative code. Our audience should be able to decode the idea that whilst he is an extraordinary character with extreme moods and episodes he is also a quiet and thoughtful soul. These two products were heavily promoted on the SMP where the fan base would expect to be teased and tempted to follow his exploits and also feel involved in the promotion of his album and music video. Having an overall mission statement that stated he was 'x and x' really helped me design the overall brand which was represented with a conventionally punk colour palette, signifying a conventional metanarrative of a rebellious but dedicated punk	