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91251



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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Level 2 Media Studies 2023

### 91251 Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre

Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre.	Demonstrate in-depth understanding of an aspect of a media genre.	Demonstrate critical understanding of an aspect of a media genre.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**You should write an essay on ONE of the four statements in this booklet.**

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–10 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in any cross-hatched area (DO NOT WRITE). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

Low Merit

TOTAL 05

## Page 1

### INSTRUCTIONS

Choose ONE **media genre**.

Write an essay discussing the extent to which you agree or disagree with ONE of the statements below, in relation to an aspect of your chosen media genre.

### STATEMENTS (Choose ONE)

1. There is always more than one reason a media genre has to change.
2. Media producers must be creative when recycling genre tropes\*.
3. A media genre must appeal to audience tastes to remain profitable.
4. A media genre is successful when it satisfies audience expectations.

\*trope a common or overused storytelling device

Media genre:

Select your statement:  ▾

### PLANNING

**B** *I* U | ▾ | ▾ |

joker 2019 and the dark knight 1 billion 2008  
endgame 2.8 billion 2019  
black panther 1.3 billion 2018  
into the spiderverse 384 mil 2019  
shang chi 432 mil 2021  
x men 296 mil 2000

Victoria Alonso - "It's not if change is coming. Change is coming and you have to be prepared."  
"Without new fans, the genre will never have longevity"

David Hayter " It's like lightning in a bottle" - x men

I'm hoping we'll start to get avengers fatigue - James Cameron 2015

28% of top 50 films, 14 films

## ESSAY

Type your essay in the space below. You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 750–800 words. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay. (The counter will change colour when you reach the recommended word count.)

Make sure you **respond only to your chosen statement** *throughout* your essay, and support your discussion with **evidence** from a range of media texts and / or other sources, which may include your own production experience.

**B** *I* U |   |  

Taking up 28% of the top 50 films of all time, we know superhero films are popular and, according to box office, profitable too. The genre has many fans invested in every film they make and that's how they're staying profitable. But even these fans seem to be getting bored of the genre and with a franchise that seems to repel new fans, will the genre still be appealing to audience tastes? If it doesn't, where else will the genre get money from?

Marvel is incredibly successful and, as aforementioned, it's all due to its many die-hard fans. People who know that they like super hero films so they throw all of their money and free time into watching these films but now that more and more people are turning a critical eye to the once beloved superhero genre, how will it keep appealing to audiences? Well I believe that they can by switching up the usual mould. In 2019, Marvel released a film that was completely different from the other films yet exactly what the genre needed and this film was called "Into the Spider-verse." It amassed a box office of 384 million dollars and was well loved by audiences. This then led the sequel film "Across the Spider-verse" released in 2023 to receive plenty of viewers and money. By changing up the formula but still staying fairly authentic to the usual genre, Marvel managed to make one of their most praised films of recent times and 384 million dollars is a lot of money. But it's not quite as much as their other 2019 film.

Marvel's magnum opus, Avengers: Endgame. It amassed a massive 2.8 billions dollars and raving reviews. It was exciting, new, and exactly what the audience wanted from the genre. It fit the tastes of the audience and made a ton of profit. It seemed to revive a seemingly dying genre and expanded the number of marvel cinematic universe fans, or the MCU fans. But this MCU seems to also be what is killing the genre. By switching up their usual stand alone series and instead connecting every superhero film, they started to drive new fans away. In order to watch the new marvel movie, they have to watch 2 other films in order to understand everything going on, it becomes a daunting task instead of a fun night out at the movies. Marvel haven't made over a billion dollars on a film since and I believe it's due to their MCU franchise not meeting the tastes of anyone outside of the established marvel fans. Even their current fans are critiquing the genre and it won't be long until their inability to keep up with the current tastes will catch up on their profits.

Why are current fans critiquing the genre? I personally believe it's due to their formulaic way of making films. Superhero films are know for their predictability and simple one liners. It relies on their main character and mascot being charming enough to distract from the fact he's beating up the same villain in a different costume for the 700th time. While this was exactly what audiences wanted to see at first, seeing it done again and again is incredibly boring and it is contributing to their slow decline in profits. A common complaint of a recent film released, Shang-chi, was that it was boring. They added more cultural representation which was praised but many fans and haters alike complained that the film was repetitive. The film was predictable and just like the other superhero films. I believe that if they release many more films that are as predictable as Shang-chi, people will stop watching them because they can guess the plot from the summary alone.

Despite me criticising the genre and referencing critiques, you may notice that the box office has remained incredibly high. No matter how much time I spend saying the genre will die out and that people will stop watching, they still haven't stopped watching. That's because fans are loyal. Marvel movies have a different factor that most films don't have that keeps people coming back for more and it's fan loyalty. Where no matter how predictable a film is or whether or not the last 5 films fit the audience tastes, they still go back for more because they want to know what happens next and need something new to talk about with their other marvel fan friends. So no, in the case of the superhero genre, they don't need to appeal to the audience's tastes in order to make a profit because the genre is staying alive due to long-time fans of it who can't let the films go.

Overall, audience tastes are incredibly objective and while the genre is predictable and bad to many, there is still a large number who will continue to feed the studio their money. Criticism and longevity don't matter at the moment while all of the fans are young but later on, I doubt it will manage to stay alive from its film quality alone. No matter how groundbreaking one film is or boring the next is, the audience will keep coming back for more.

865 WORDS / 800 RECOMMENDED



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## Merit

**Subject:** Media Studies

**Standard:** 91251

**Total score:** 05

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
1 (3)	M5	The candidate provided an original discussion of the superhero genre, in response to statement 3: "A media genre must appeal to audience tastes to remain profitable". The response is an evidence-based discussion, using both genre texts, as well as secondary sources to explore the idea of adapting and keeping up with current audience tastes to retain the current audience and appeal to more than their Marvel fanbase. The candidate does well to recognise fan loyalty plays a role in sustaining profitability. The statement is addressed throughout.