6.1 The Media: Ownership, Control and the Pluralist versus Marxist Debate: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 20 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For the longer questions write full sentences where asked. Time guidance: 20 minutes.

1 Which term describes a small number of companies owning a large share of the media market in the UK and internationally?

- ☐ A) pluralism
- ☐ B) conglomeration
- ☐ C) oligopoly
- ☐ D) representation

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 State one reason Marxists give for why media conglomerates might reduce critical reporting on capitalism.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Define 'vertical integration' in media ownership and give one example of how it might affect content control.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Outline two ways traditional Marxist theory argues media owners control content to serve class interests.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 Analyse three weaknesses of the pluralist explanation for media diversity and control.

(Total for Question 5 is 6 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.1 The Media: Ownership, Control and the Pluralist versus Marxist Debate: Test Pack

Question 1

C (oligopoly) **B1**

Answer: C

Question 2

identifies a reason, e.g. conglomerates have business interests that could be harmed by critical reporting **B1**

development, e.g. owners may avoid exposing corporate wrongdoing or supporting labour movements **B1**

Answer: Marxists say conglomerates have business interests that could be harmed by critical reporting, so owners may avoid exposing corporate wrongdoing or supporting labour movements to protect profits and relationships.

Question 3

definition: ownership of multiple stages of production and distribution by the same company **B1**

example, e.g. a company owning a studio and a streaming service may prioritise its own films on the platform **B1**

Answer: Vertical integration is when one company owns multiple stages of production and distribution, for example a studio that also owns a streaming service may prioritise its own films on the platform, affecting what audiences see.

Question 4

identifies a way, e.g. owners use their power to set editorial policy that supports ruling class ideas **B1**

develops by explaining how this promotes ruling class ideology, e.g. pro-capitalist or pro-business views **B1**

adds a second linked point, e.g. owners can hire editors who reflect their views or remove staff who do not **B1**

further development, e.g. this reduces critical coverage of corporate behaviour and labour disputes **B1**

Answer: Traditional Marxists argue owners set editorial policy to promote ruling class ideas and hire or sack staff to ensure those views are reinforced, which reduces critical coverage of capitalist interests such as corporate misconduct and labour disputes.

Question 5

identifies a weakness, e.g. concentrated ownership can limit real choice despite apparent competition **B1**

develops this, e.g. cross ownership and conglomeration mean different outlets can give similar messages **B1**

identifies a second weakness, e.g. market choices favour profitable, mainstream content over minority or critical voices **B1**

develops this, e.g. niche or critical producers may be squeezed out or forced to commercialise their content **B1**

adds a third evaluative point, e.g. regulatory capture can mean regulators are weak or influenced by industry **B1**

develops the third point, e.g. so pluralist faith in regulation as a check may be misplaced in practice **B1**

Answer: Weaknesses include that concentrated ownership can reduce genuine choice because conglomerates often present similar viewpoints, and market incentives favour profitable mainstream content over critical or minority voices, while regulation may be weak or influenced by industry so it does not always protect diversity.

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