

Deconstructing yourself

The term **deconstruction** describes the process of analysing a **text** to understand the different meanings, and how they are understood by the audiences for that text. This means emphasis is put on the viewer/listener/reader. The term **reader** can be anyone who makes sense of a **text** and the term **text** applies not only to print but also to music, photography or moving image.

It is important to separate our own involvement as consumers of media from our analysis as students of media. A good introductory task is to recognise what sort of media consumers we are.

Firstly complete the grid below, ticking the column which most applies to you for each of the media activities:

| Per week | Up to 1hr | 1hr – 2hrs | 2hrs – 5hrs | Over 5hrs (how many?) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Watching television programmes | | | | |
| Reading newspapers | | | | |
| Watching films at the cinema | | | | |
| Listening to radio | | | | |
| Going to the theatre | | | | |
| Listening to CDs | | | | |
| Reading magazines | | | | |
| Watching films on DVD/Video | | | | |
| Watching films on TV | | | | |

Next, in the first column of the table below, rank the types of programme according to how often you watch them – (1) will be the most frequent.

In the 2nd column indicate how you view them – A for 'alone', B for 'with other people but still fully engaged', C for 'alone but with programme on whilst doing other things' and D for 'with others while talking and doing other things'.

| Programme type | Viewing frequency 1-14 | Viewing context A - D |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| News/ News programmes | | |
| Soap opera | | |
| Documentary (all kinds) | | |
| Sitcom | | |
| Comedy shows | | |
| Quiz shows | | |
| Game shows | | |
| Chat shows/discussion | | |
| Music programmes | | |
| TV Drama | | |
| Programmes about sport/ sports coverage | | |
| Adaptations of novels/plays | | |
| OTHER (Please state | | |

Now compare your answers to the 2nd table with at least **two** other students. If the results are different, what might explain this?