

**APPLY IT**

Use this CSP (or another example of a print product) to answer the following questions:

- 1 How have the pages of the product been **constructed**?
  - Make detailed observations on
    - the layout and design of the pages
    - the construction of images, including the use of camera, costume, make-up, poses, mise-en-scène, lighting and post-production editing
    - the choices made in the written elements of the production.
- 2 What examples of **symbolic** communication can you find?
- 3 How is **anchorage** used to create meaning?
- 4 Does the product contribute to the construction of **cultural myths**?
- 5 How does the product use **narrative** techniques?
- 6 What can you say about the product's relationship to its form or **genre**?
- 7 What **representations** are created by the product? Does it use or subvert **stereotypes**?
- 8 Is there evidence of **misrepresentation** or **selective representation** within the product?
- 9 How does the product **position** its audience?
- 10 Does the product create ideas about **identity**?
- 11 How does the product attempt to control audience interpretation (**decoding**) of the **encoded** messages?
- 12 What **ideological** meanings are created?

## B: Targeted close study product case study: *The Missing*

- **Platform:** Broadcast
- **Form:** Television
- **Product:** *The Missing*, with a specific focus on Series 2, Episode 1
- **Targeted elements of the theoretical framework:** Audience and industries
- **Assessment information:** Your knowledge of *The Missing* may be assessed in Section B of the AS examination.

Your knowledge and understanding of this media product will be assessed through your application of ideas and theories of **audience** and **industries**. This analysis will refer to media language (including genre and narrative) and representation issues as they relate to the audience and industrial contexts of the product.

### Introduction: media language, narrative and genre

*The Missing* is a crime drama. Each series focuses on an investigation related to a missing child or children. In each series, the initial episodes set up the **equilibrium** and the **narrative disruption**. Subsequent episodes chart the development of the investigation until the **resolution** is provided in the final episode where a **new equilibrium** is established. The eight-episode **arc** in each series maintains the central enigma for the story. Further questions, problems and setbacks help drive the narrative forward. The main protagonist of *The Missing* is Julien Baptiste, a French police officer, who investigates the cases in both series. Although the police investigation is an important part of the story, *The Missing* (both Series 1 and 2) focuses on the parents of the missing children and tells their stories. The police officer provides a link between the two series.

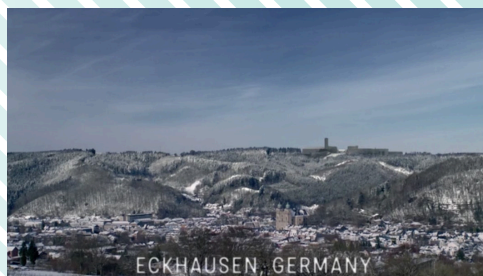
<b><i>The Missing – Series 1</i></b>	The plot centres around the disappearance of a child whilst on holiday with his parents in France. Events occur in two timelines - the time of the boy's disappearance and eight years later when the boy's father returns to the scene of the disappearance.
<b><i>The Missing – Series 2</i></b>	The teenage daughter of a military family living in Germany is abducted. The plot focuses on the impact of her return to the family eleven years later.

Episode 1 of Series 2 of *The Missing* acts as an introduction to the characters, the plot and the locations. Similar to Series 1, Series 2's story is told across multiple timelines. The first scenes in episode 1 show the abduction of a young girl in 2003. She is shown apparently returning to her family in 2014 and then other events are described as being in 'the present day'. There are additional flashbacks too which reveal further narrative information as the series progresses.

The main story takes place in Eckhausen in Germany. Events also take place in Bretoncelles, France and Kirkuk in Iraq. Captions initially appear on screen making it explicit which location we are in. The German setting is used in both timelines and the audience can identify which timeframe events are taking place in by changes to the mise-en-scene. For example, events in the present day take place in Spring whilst events in the past occurred in Winter. The landscapes reflect the different seasons. The characters have different haircuts in each timeline and one character is shown as having been badly scarred at some point after the girl's return. The audience know they are in the past when his face shows no scarring and when the girl's brother is in his early, rather than later teens. The winter scenes are shown lit in cool tones whereas the scenes in the Spring are brighter and slightly warmer. The mise-en-scene in the scenes in Iraq are characterized by bright warm lighting and geographical markers of this location including the use of sandy brown tones and traditional middle Eastern clothing and settings. Once established, these media language choices become temporal and geographical markers for the audience and allow them to engage with and understand this complex story.



Geographical and temporal markers



The past – a Winter setting



The present – set in Spring



A graphic match used to move from present to past. The present shown in warmer tones and the mother has shorter hair.

Crime drama is one of the most popular **genres** of television programming. It has been popular for many decades and the genre has **adapted** over the years to reflect changes in society and to meet audiences' changing expectations. This means that within this genre there are many different **sub-genres** – some feature individual detectives often with a helper, as in *Sherlock*; others focus on investigative teams (*Criminal Minds*). Some crime dramas are gruesome and have a dark tone (*The Fall*); others are much lighter (*Midsomer Murders*). Genres need to change and develop



Landscapes from *The Killing*



Landscapes from *Broadchurch*

otherwise audiences will find them **predictable** and **clichéd**. The varieties of crime drama on offer allow the genre to remain popular with a range of audience groups who seek different experiences from it.

A relatively recent development of the genre has been the rise in popularity of 'Nordic-noir' with English-speaking film and television audiences. This sub-genre of crime drama began in literature and was soon developed for film and television. TV programmes such as *Wallander* and films such as *Insomnia* and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* began to find audiences for the sub-genre outside Scandinavia where it began. Nordic-noir uses **noir** genre conventions and relocates them from the traditional Hollywood film-noir US urban setting to Scandinavian locations – often with a focus on rural and/or industrial urban locations. *The Killing*, a Danish TV show, was broadcast on BBC4 in January 2011 – four years after the original Danish broadcast (*The Killing* will be examined in detail in Chapter 6 of the Year 2 book). The show became a **cult success** and attracted a regular audience, generating lots of discussion between fans online. Although its audience figures look small compared with other more mainstream television programmes, the fact that over half a million people each week were watching a **subtitled foreign drama** presented over 20 episodes on a **niche channel** made the importing of the show a ground-breaking moment. The success of *The Killing* has had a major impact. The show was remade for the US market and more European TV has been broadcast by the BBC. Channel 4 also now has a large collection of non-English-language programmes available, collected as 'Walter Presents'.

*The Killing* has also inspired the way new crime dramas are presented: Nordic-noir has a range of visual and thematic codes and conventions that have proved to be very popular. One of the most successful ITV dramas of recent years was heavily influenced by Nordic-noir: *Broadchurch* was broadcast in 2013 and its first season attracted eight to nine million viewers per episode, with over ten million viewers tuning in for the final season. *Broadchurch* used a number of conventions taken from Nordic-noir and so too does *The Missing*. Some of the conventions of the sub-genre include the following:

**APPLY IT**

Using the first episode of Series 2 of *The Missing* to provide examples:

- Identify the way the episode uses crime drama and/or Nordic-noir **codes and conventions**.

How does the episode offer new or **unconventional experiences** for the audience?

- Identify **narrative techniques** that are used to:
  - provide information about the plot
  - create temporal and geographical markers
  - give an insight into character roles' personalities
  - create a sense of drama, tension and suspense.

Some visual codes of Nordic-noir	Some thematic codes of Nordic-noir
Symbolic montage in the title sequence and/or use of melancholic music	The story will often be focused on crime and police investigations
Muted colours	Investigator is a 'lone wolf hero' who has personal problems to contend with and/or a dark past
Subdued and low-key lighting	Investigator 'hero' may struggle with personal relationships
Long slow pans and tracking shots over landscapes and landmarks	Other characters are shown to be complex and often flawed
Settings are often wintery	Authority figures cannot always be trusted
Rural landscapes are often presented as 'bleak'	Focus on the consequences of violent crime
Urban landscapes are often presented as industrial	Dramatic tension and suspense

**Industrial context**

*The Missing* is a television drama originally broadcast in the UK by the BBC on its main channel, BBC1. At the time of writing there have been two series of the programme. The first series of eight episodes was broadcast at 9pm on Sundays

from October to December 2014. The second series was broadcast in the same timeslot in October and November of 2016. The series was successful in the UK, with the first series building its audience from just over six million for the first episode, to 8.7 million for the series finale. The second series attracted over nine million viewers for the first episode but lost some viewers, with just over eight million people tuning in for the final episode.

### Production and distribution

*The Missing* was financed by a collaboration between four production companies: Playground Entertainment, Company Pictures, New Pictures and Two Brothers Pictures, with investments from film and TV financiers, including the Flemish Radio and Television Broadcasting Organisations and the Belgian national **public service broadcaster**. The BBC commissioned the show and were also involved in its production. The show was distributed by **all3media**.

**Playground Entertainment** is a global production company based in the UK and the US. The company was involved in other dramas such as *The White Queen* (BBC, 2013) and *Wolf Hall* (BBC, 2015).

**Company Pictures** is a UK-based production company that is a subsidiary of *The Missing's* distribution company. Company Pictures was also involved in the production of *The White Queen*. Both *The White Queen* and *The Missing* were financed in collaboration with a Flemish production company.

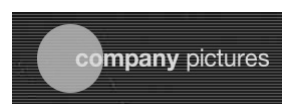
**all3media** is identified as the UK's largest independent media **distributor**. Its function is to sell media products to broadcasters, cinemas and other **distribution** outlets. The **all3media** group owns several production companies, so is also involved in the **production** of media content as well as its **distribution**. It owns production companies around the world and has worked in collaboration with many other production companies. It is involved in many different genres of television, from dramas such as *The Missing*, *Skins* and *Midsomer Murders* to reality shows such as *The Only Way is Essex* and *10 Years Younger*, game shows such as *The Cube* and children's programming such as *Horrible Histories*.

**all3media** is owned by the US companies **Discovery Communications** and **Liberty Global**. Discovery own the Discovery Channels as well as having interests in other production and distribution companies. Liberty Global is a telecommunications company that runs phone, internet and cable network services around the world. Liberty Global has shares in Lionsgate and ITV plc. It owns Virgin Media and European mobile phone companies including Vodafone Netherlands.

In addition to the globalised nature of the funding of *The Missing*, its production was shaped by the fact that the production received tax incentives from the Belgian government to film there and employ local production staff. The first series was set in France but filmed in Belgium. The second series is set in Germany but some of the filming locations were in Belgium. The German setting, the casting of a French actor in the role of the police investigator and the use of British actors as the family at the centre of the narrative conflict will have helped to create a more global rather than narrow local appeal for the show.

### Broadcasting and distribution

BBC1 is the primary, mainstream BBC television channel. It broadcasts a variety of programmes for different audiences across the day and its 9pm Sunday slot is often used for dramas that have adult appeal. When *The Missing* was first broadcast, the BBC Trust had an overview on the running of the BBC, including its programming. The Trust closed in 2017 and the BBC now has to follow Ofcom **regulations** regarding the material it broadcasts. The watershed is identified by Ofcom as being



a process that acts to protect children from potentially 'harmful' or 'unsuitable material'. Unsuitable material is defined as including 'everything from sexual content to violence, graphic or distressing imagery and swearing'. The **scheduling** of *The Missing* identifies that the target audience for *The Missing* will be assumed to be 'adult' but the programme will not be overly graphic as the broadcast is still relatively early in the evening. *The Missing* was also available for audiences to watch on the BBC's streaming, catch-up service, **iPlayer**. Series 1 and 2 of *The Missing* are currently available to purchase on DVD – both separately and as a two-series box set. They can also be bought as digital downloads.

*The Missing* is currently available internationally via Amazon's streaming service. Series 1 is free to watch for subscribers to the service. Series 2 can be bought or rented. *The Missing* has been broadcast internationally. It was broadcast on BBC First in Australia and on the US network Starz.

## STARZ

**Starz** is a US premium cable network. It broadcasts film and television programmes to audiences who **subscribe** to its service. It buys programming from different producers but also funds its own original programmes. Within the Starz network there is a range of channels that target specific niche audiences. For example, **Starz Edge** targets 18- to 34-year-olds and **Starz in Black** targets black audiences. *The Missing* was broadcast on **Starz**, the network's main channel.



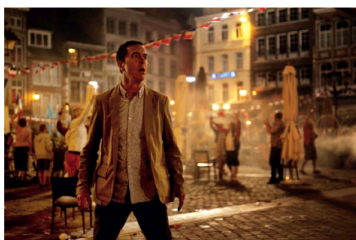
**Amazon Prime** is a film and television service that can be accessed via an annual subscription. Subscription allows access to a range of television and film titles either via streaming or as downloads that can be watched offline. **Amazon Prime** subscription also includes access to free next-day delivery when shopping on the Amazon website. Not all films and television programmes are free to watch within the subscription. Some titles are available for a small rental charge or can be purchased. Non-subscribers can also purchase film and TV products from Amazon.

Amazon has funded the **production** of original content but it also provides access to programming from many different producers around the world. Like Netflix, Amazon Prime provides a distribution model that removes the need for scheduling, and both companies have a global reach. Prime members now outnumber non-Prime customers. *Fortune* magazine reported that there were over 80 million Amazon Prime subscribers as of April 2017.

### Advertising and marketing

The first series of *The Missing* was marketed in several ways in the UK. As the first series of a new television drama it needed to draw attention to itself, create interest and generate discussions that would hopefully encourage people to watch when it was broadcast. Ahead of its initial broadcast, information about the programme was communicated to other media outlets. The BBC provided **press releases** and media packs containing information that could be reworked into articles and blog posts. Some press releases provided basic information while others provided much more detail. A detailed press release was released over six months prior to the broadcast of Series 1 providing quotes from producers, a plot summary, biographical details on the stars and industrial information about production. This information is included so writers and journalists have information to hand to help them write articles on the forthcoming programme. Press releases allow writers to choose the focus of their articles and provide the kind of information that will appeal to their readers. It is hoped that the early release of information will create audience awareness of the project, which in turn will encourage social media discussions. The press release shown on the left identifies James Nesbitt as the star of the show. He is a well-known actor and this information alone is likely to make the press release newsworthy for many entertainment journalists and could help encourage viral communication among fans and other audience members.

Extract from the BBC press pack for Series 1 of *The Missing*



### THE MISSING

BBC One (8x60mins)

28 October 2014, 9pm

*The Missing* is made by New Pictures and Company Pictures in association with Two Brothers Pictures and Playground. It is written by Harry and Jack Williams and directed by Tom Shankland.

presented as well as Q & A interviews with the stars, the writers and the director that can be published under the journalists' or bloggers' byline.

The press pack for the first series included character profiles and plot summaries – everything a writer would need to write a feature on the programme.

Trailers were also used to promote the new programme. They were shown on television, featured on the BBC website and uploaded to YouTube. Trailers can be embedded in online articles and blog posts as well as being linked to on social media. As well as trailers, audiences can access interviews and Q&As with the stars on YouTube. In addition to promoting the show, YouTube views can also generate an income for the media producers.

**Company Pictures** features its shows on its website and *The Missing* (Series 1) is used as an illustration on the site's homepage. For the release of Series 1, the **BBC** created webpages for the show. It offers character and episode summaries, and clips from the programme. There is a feature on the writers and a behind the scenes blog written by the director. Additional content is also provided, with pages that focus on aspects of the **narrative** such as the significance of a drawing made by the missing child and background information on the father's past. This extra fictional information is presented realistically. The father's background is revealed through the content of a 'police file' and a suspect's 'medical file' can be read (as long as you can read French).

The second series of *The Missing* was also marketed with trailers and promotional interviews. The BBC released a media pack although its content was less extensive than that provided for Series 1. Much of the promotion for Series 2 would have been based on the success of Series 1 but the addition of two well-known actors (Keeley Hawes and David Morrissey) would have made the new series newsworthy.

The BBC extended the webpages for the programme by including specific content for Series 2. It offers character and episode summaries and clips from the second series. Actors are interviewed and there is a Q&A article interviewing the writers. The scripts for each episode can be downloaded or read online. Less online content was generated for Series 2 than for Series 1 demonstrating that there was a substantial investment in the launch of the programme but less money was spent on additional content once it had become established.

The BBC webpage for *The Missing* Series 2

**Characters: Who's affected by Alice's disappearance?**

**Read the scripts**

**Keeley Hawes: Child dramas felt 'too close to home'**

**Series 2 Q&A with the writers**

**"This is starting to feel like an interrogation"**  
Series 2, A Prison Without Walls

**"You don't think a parent knows their own child?"**  
Series 2, A Prison Without Walls

**Julien asks to speak with Alice**  
Series 2, The Turtle and the Stick

**Alice leads the police to the bunker**  
Series 2, The Turtle and the Stick

Facebook and Twitter were also used to promote the programme. The hashtag #themissing has been used for both series. Pre-broadcast information is shared by producers, journalists and members of the public and this creates an anticipation for the show. Audience members share comments and theories about the show during its broadcast and also use the hashtag to share information related to the show or its

## Filming starts on BBC1 James Nesbitt drama *The Missing*



News Jon Creamer 06 March 2014  
Filming has started on 8 x 60 thriller series, *The Missing*, starring James Nesbitt and Frances O'Connor

The character driven drama, made by New Pictures and Company Pictures in association with Two Brothers Pictures and Playground, is written by Harry and Jack Williams and directed by Tom Shankland (Ripper Street). It's due for TX on BBC1 and Starz in the US later this year.

Article on Series 1 of *The Missing* from [televsual.com](http://televsual.com)

Home / Media packs / *The Missing* series two

### *The Missing* series two

**A child goes missing - and returns 11 years later, in the second series by Harry and Jack Williams**

**Introduction**  
Character descriptions  
Interview with David Morrissey  
Interview with Keeley Hawes  
Interview with Tchky Karyo  
In conversation with Harry and Jack Williams

Search the site  
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Enter a subject, topic or keyword

**Related Programme Information**  
The Missing - episode one  
The Missing - episode two

**Related BBC Links**

**The Missing series two**  
Date: 04.10.2016 Last updated: 04.10.2016 at 12:53  
Category: BBC One, Drama

Writers Harry and Jack Williams explore a different aspect of what happens when a child goes missing.  
The first series of *The Missing*, which followed the disappearance of Oliver Hughes, and the desperate search by his father Tony (James Nesbitt) to find him, gripped audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. It was nominated for several British and regional two Golden Globes nominations. However, when the writers Harry and Jack Williams wanted to take the story forward, they didn't want to return to Oliver's tale. Instead, they decided to explore a different side of what happens when a child goes missing.  
Set mostly on a British military base in Ederhausen, Germany, but reaching as far as the US, battleships in Northern Iraq, the story begins when a young British woman wanders through the woods and collapses in the town square. It's Christmas 2014. We soon learn her name is Alice Webster (Keeley Hawes) and she has been missing for 11 years.  
The Missing explores how a family, and a community, cope with her return.

**"We didn't want to recreate the same story; rather than losing someone, it's about finding someone, and whether that is the happy ending that everyone thinks it is"**

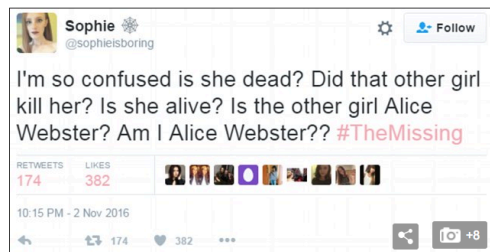
**The Missing Series 2 BBC media pack**

## 'I'm starting to think I could be Alice Webster': Massive plot twist in BBC kidnap drama *The Missing* leaves baffled viewers questioning their own sanity

- The addictive thriller dropped a huge plot twist right at the end
- Keeley Hawes' character appeared to discover a third missing girl
- Not only that but fake Alice Webster is still alive and in Switzerland
- Detective Baptiste also found out another crucial detail in the saga

By NATALIE CORNER FOR MAILONLINE

PUBLISHED: 11:35, 3 November 2016 | UPDATED: 13:39, 3 November 2016



A report on the Twitter response to *The Missing* from MailOnline

stars. As the show trends on Twitter so more users, including other businesses and organisations, use the interest in the programme to raise their own profile.

The trends on Twitter are also picked up by more traditional news sources and so the programme and the audience response become news stories. Discussion in the press raises the programme's profile and this developing interest in the programme during its broadcast run can help explain its increasing audience during Series 1 and the fact that its audience numbers peaked at the start of Series 2.



- **Using examples from Episode 1, Series 2 of *The Missing*:**
  - In what ways does the episode reflect the fact that its **funding** came from several international sources?
  - Whose **point of view** is the audience shown? How may this have helped with the marketing of the programme?
  - What **appeal** might the **setting** of the show create for UK audiences?
- **How did technology help with the success of the show?**
- **Access the BBC website for *The Missing*, Series 2**, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07xt09g>
  - How would the website help **attract and maintain an audience** for the programme?
  - What **gratifications** does the website offer for the audience?
  - How could the website add to the **enjoyment** of the TV programme?
  - How does the website reflect **BBC1's brand image**?
  - What gratifications does the first episode of Series 2 of *The Missing* offer the viewer?
  - How are these gratifications created?
  - Are there any aspects of the programme that you think would encourage viewers to join in social media discussions?

### Audience

*The Missing* is a successful show. It is popular with audiences and critics – Series 2 has a 96% rating on Rotten Tomatoes, a website where critical responses are analysed and aggregated. The advertising and marketing discussed above will have helped make people aware of the programme and, combined with social media discussions, this awareness spread during the broadcast of the first season. Catch-up services mean that people can join the audience later in the run.

Much of the programme's success will be down to the **gratifications** provided in the way the product is constructed, in its use of **genre codes and conventions**, in its ability to tell an engaging story and its use of interesting **representations**. Without this, advertising and marketing will not persuade people to return to a programme that they have not enjoyed. Audiences return to well-written and well-acted examples of this genre, as mysteries are intriguing and audiences engage with characters and their emotional journeys.

The crime drama genre offers many **entertainment gratifications** from the **intellectual** engagement with twists and turns of the mystery and the ultimate reveal to the reassurance of the **myth** of 'good overcoming evil'. Traditionally, the crime drama would end with the capture or destruction of the criminal, so a danger is removed from society. More modern examples of the genre sometimes subvert this expectation, which could be seen as reflecting a more pessimistic view of humanity or, depending on your point of view, a more realistic one. Crime dramas allow audiences to explore dark emotions, behaviours and motivations in a

safe environment. *The Missing* offers **vicarious** and **visceral** pleasures drawing the audience into the emotionally traumatised world of the distraught parents.

Crime dramas raise debates about the levels of violence they present and the impact that these may have on audiences. Crime dramas are sometimes accused of exploiting cultural fears, especially when the victims are children. The basic plot-line of *The Missing* Series 1 reads as follows:

*In 2006, a five-year-old from a middle-class family disappears whilst on holiday in Europe with their parents.*

This mirrors the real-life events of the disappearance of Madeleine McCann in 2007. The McCann family tragedy became a major news story and over ten years later the search for Madeleine continues and theories as to what happened are still part of British culture.

The success of the genre can offer the audience an exploration of their fears and concerns but could also feed into what Gerbner calls 'mean world syndrome'. The world of crime drama is filled with violence and appears to reinforce ideas that our modern world is a violent and dangerous one. The violence of crime drama is often random and the victims of violence are innocents. In *The Missing*, a family holiday turns into a tragedy, in *The Killing* a teenage girl is brutally murdered, and week after week in *Criminal Minds* innocent law-abiding citizens find themselves terrorised by psychopaths and serial killers. While there are incidents of horrific violence in the real world, they are rare and the exception rather than the rule.

Violent crimes will often be reported in the news, so the repetition of the idea that we live in a 'mean world', coming from both factual and fictional media, can lead to audiences believing the world is more violent than it really is. The risks of being a victim of violent crime are very small and, according to Pinker, homicide rates are 'around half of what they were in 1990'. People tend to think that the risks are, however, greater than they are (Mueller).

Media producers know that tapping into audiences' fears and concerns is often a recipe for success. Dyer's **utopian solution theory** states that audiences like to consume media products that make up for a lack of, or help provide, temporary solutions to problems related to their real lives. The intensity of emotion and narrative twists and turns in a crime drama can enliven someone who feels their life is monotonous and predictable; the active nature of the investigation can invigorate someone who feels physically or emotionally exhausted. If the audience believes we live in a 'mean world', crime dramas reinforce their point of view. This may not provide reassurance but there is a pleasure that can be derived when the media confirms your existing beliefs.

The popularity of the crime drama genre means that media producers know there is a potential audience for more products within this genre. Fictional crime dramas attract audiences, as do documentaries about real-life crimes. One of the most popular Netflix shows in 2015 was a documentary called *Making a Murderer*, and the podcast *Serial*, also a true-life crime drama, was a major success in 2014.

*The Missing* is a successful TV programme. Part of its success comes from creating a good marketing campaign but its popularity is largely due to the way the show is constructed.

- Audiences respond to compelling stories, appealing characters and intriguing mysteries.
- The programme generates social media engagement that benefits the media producers as it adds to the promotion of the show.
- Audiences also gain by being part of a group having conversations about the programme, where they are able to feel a sense of community.



#### APPLY IT

- What gratifications does the first episode of Series 2 of *The Missing* offer the viewer?
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