

# MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

## HSC: Depth Study Popular Culture

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### Syllabus Links

The consumers of the popular culture and the nature of its consumption

- The relationship of heroes and mythology to media and consumption
- How consumption and ownership of paraphernalia influence a sense of identity

### Relevant concepts

commercialisation, commodification, consumption, power, globalisation, technologies, gender, identity

### Rationale

The following resource was designed as an external learning experience for students who are studying Marvel within the context of the Popular Culture Depth Study. The following resources were designed pre-Covid. Current challenges related to external excursions for many schools may impact on the ability to implement this experience in its original, intended format.

**However, there are many ways the following resource could be adapted such as:**

- Students engaging in the following activities individually and in their own time as an optional learning experience
- For students engaging in a Popular Culture based topic in their PIP – the resource could be a great example of how to engage in some elements of primary research. i.e. students can adapt to their specific topic
- The following learning experience can be adapted to a different Popular Culture Focus Studies

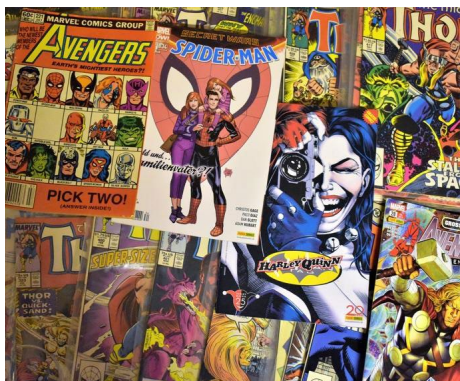
### Syllabus Outcomes

- H1 evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts
- H7 selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias
- H9 applies complex course language and concepts appropriate for a range of audiences and contexts
- H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms



Cover of *Marvel Family* number 4, as published by Fawcett Comics (September 1946). Source: Wikimedia Commons

## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK



# MARVEL STUDIOS EXCURSION PACK

Student Name: .....

### Syllabus dot points

The following syllabus dot points will be addressed in today's excursion:

- The consumers of the popular culture and the nature of its consumption
- The relationship of heroes and mythology to media and consumption
- How consumption and ownership of paraphernalia influence a sense of identity

The relevant information that you collect today for these dot points can be used as evidence across exam questions related to syllabus dot points focused on consumption.

### The aim of the excursion

This excursion is designed to help familiarise you with the nature of **consumption of the popular culture**. You will be required to access a variety of different shops within Liverpool Westfield Shopping Centre to gather a range of data in relation to the marketability and commercialisation of Marvel superheroes. To do this, you will need to implement a variety of research methods to help respond to the questions within this booklet.

The excursion will be organised as follows:

#### PART 1:

**9:00am: Meet at Liverpool Westfield Event Cinemas to be distributed workbooks.**

**9:00am – 10:30am: Start visiting the various shops outlined in the workbook. Complete the various activities within the workbooks at the relevant shops.**

**10:30am – 11:00am: Recess at Liverpool food courts.**

**11:00am – 12:00pm: Work towards finishing the work booklet**

#### PART 2:

**Assemble at the Event Cinema to watch Avengers: Endgame at \_\_\_\_ pm**



The following stores that you will be required to visit include:



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### PART 1: ZING POP CULTURE

1. As you walk into the shop, observe the advertising in and around the shop. How does **Zing** commodify the MARVEL franchise to get their target market's attention? Reflect on how successful the layout at the entrance of the shop is to draw in shoppers and refer to specific features that you see.

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2. As you tour the shop, observe and identify the variety of different MARVEL products that are for sale. As you write them down, note down their cost as well.

Product 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 5: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 6: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 7: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 8: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 9: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 10: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

3. Of the products that you have listed, what is the ratio of functional products (products that you can use such as t-shirts, drink bottles etc) to ornamental products (such as bobble heads or products that are used for decoration)? Using your own **participant observation**, why would consumers wish to purchase both of these products?

- **Ratio of functional products to ornamental products:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Why would people purchase both functional and ornamental products:**

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4. When considering the amount of money needed to purchase ornamental paraphernalia, why do you think people would buy these products?

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5. Engage in an **observation** of the products that are around the shop. Count/quantify how many pieces of paraphernalia:

- depicts female heroes or is marketed towards a female consumer base
- depicts male heroes or is marketed towards a male consumer base
- depicts BOTH female and male heroes and is marketed towards a gender neutral consumer base

## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

Can you draw any conclusions regarding the influence of gender on consumption in relation to Marvel paraphernalia.

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6. Prior to your visit organise a short interview (approx. 5 min) with one of the store clerks. Remember: Ethical consent and a copy of the interview questions should be obtained prior to the interview date.

*Please record the store clerks responses below:*

- i. What is the most popular MARVEL product that is sold in your shop? Why do you think this might be?

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- ii. How well do MARVEL products sell in comparison with the other franchises that are sold within **Zing**, such as Star Wars and Harry Potter?

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- iii. Why do you think this is?

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- iv. In your opinion how successful has **Zing's** marketing and advertising been for the sale of MARVEL products?

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- v. What other factors that are outside of Zing’s marketability that have influenced consumers to purchase products from Zing? (You might want to direct them to refer to technology etc).

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- vi. In your opinion, why is it that people feel the need to purchase these products? Think about personal identity or belonging in a group.

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## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

vii. What do you believe are the future trends for the sale of Marvel products? Do you think we will see more female characters?

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7. Using the information that you have gathered from your interview, attempt to form conclusions about the following:

- Success of the marketability of Marvel products.
- Why certain Marvel paraphernalia is more popular than others? (Think about: Does it have to do with gender? Does it have to do with affordability?)

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## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

# BIG W

## PART 2: BIG W

When you enter Big W, there are two departments that you are going to need to approach. These are:

- Clothing
- Toys

If you are working in a group, you might want to divide and conquer to be more efficient.

### Clothing department

Walk towards the **children's** clothing department to answer the following questions. These clothes are aimed for pre-teen children.

1. Engage in an **observation** of the Marvel heroes depicted on the **BOYS** clothing. Count and quantify how many different clothing designs feature Marvel heroes on them. You should also comment on which heroes are depicted on the clothes, and the gender of these heroes.

- **Number of different clothing designs with Marvel heroes:**

There were \_\_\_\_\_ different designs of Marvel clothes for boys.

- Which heroes are represented on the boy's clothes?

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

2. Using the information that you have gathered about the Marvel clothing for boys, what **CONCLUSIONS** can you make about young, adolescent associations with action heroes? What implications may this potentially have for boy's associations with what a hero is?

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## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

3. Now, look at the girl clothes. Engage in an **observation** of the Marvel heroes depicted on female clothing. Quantify how many different clothing designs feature Marvel heroes on them. Make a special note how many of these heroes are female.

– **Number of different clothing designs with Marvel heroes:** There were \_\_\_\_\_ different designs of Marvel clothes for girls.

– Which heroes are represented on the girl's clothes?

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

4. Using the information that you have gathered about the Marvel clothing for girls, what **CONCLUSIONS** can you make about young, adolescent associations with action heroes? What implications may this potentially have for girl's associations with what a hero is?

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5. How do these clothing designs, which promote certain Marvel characters, influence identity? You might want to consider **WHAT** these characters represent, and how this consolidates the solidarity of a group sharing the same interests. You should also refer to how this affects an individual's micro experience.

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### Toy department

Walk towards the **children's** toy department to answer the following questions. You are going to need to look at both **Marvel action figures** and **Lego**.

### General questions

- Looking through the aisles, **observe** and count how many different products there are for Marvel. This includes action figures, Lego, gadgets etc:
  - Number of different products: \_\_\_\_\_
- Using the number you have written, make a judgement on the success of Marvel's commodification and marketing of its super heroes. Think about the diverse nature of the paraphernalia, target audience and price points.

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### Action figures

- Using the labels on each of the heroes, identify each of their names. Make sure you specify whether they are male or female.

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

Hero: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F)

## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK

4. Using this information, specify which market these products generally aimed at? i.e. age, gender etc

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5. Based upon your observation, how do these action figures construct or deconstruct gender?

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6. Why is the commodification of toys as heroic and strong an important marketing tool?

You should refer to specific features of the toy in your response.

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## MARVEL STUDIOS: EXCURSION ACTIVITIES PACK



### PART 3: JB HI-FI

Walk towards the JB-HI-FI to conduct the next part of your research.

1. Take a walk around JB-HI-FI. Observe the different marketing and advertising for around the shop. Count how many are aimed at Marvel movies. Describe the positioning (i.e. where in the shop) and nature of the advertising (i.e. different types of posters, cardboard cut outs, video games on display etc).

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2. As you continue your observational tour around JB-HI-FI, list the different sets of paraphernalia that is relevant to Marvel. This can include posters, toys and of course movies. You will need to quantify the variety of each paraphernalia (e.g- **Paraphernalia 1: Video Games. Quantity: There are 5 different sets of Marvel video games.**)

- Paraphernalia 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_
- Paraphernalia 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_
- Paraphernalia 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_
- Paraphernalia 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_

3. From the research that you have been conducting so far, does JB-HI-FI have more or less paraphernalia than the other shops that you have visited? Reflect on the reason for your answer.

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### PART 4: AVENGERS – ENDGAME

We are now going to view the most recent Mavel film- **Avengers Endgame (2019)**.

#### General questions

1. Perform an **observation** of the advertising for Avengers: Endgame around the cinema. Explain how this promotional material helps to further market the film to its targeted audience.
2. Looking at the candy store/check out area, identify the variety of paraphernalia that is available for purchase with food and drink:

Product 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 5: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 6: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 7: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 8: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 9: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product 10: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

3. Draw conclusions why certain paraphernalia would be marketed onto drink cups etc for the film?

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