The cover look

sample page The cover look **Start of N** Popular magazine covers use specific visual techniques to attract attention and give prominence to different stories. Composers use strategies such as:

- different font types and sizes-for example futuristic, classic or high-tech fonts
- varieties of colour-dark or bold colours are often aimed at males, while bright and pastel colours are often aimed at females
- high level emotive words-such as 'awesome', 'free', 'scary', 'extreme', 'nightmare' and 'secret'
- photographs of 'ideal' people or celebrities-a celebrity looking at the reader attracts attention; their pose and body language, as well as the camera angle and size of the shot, can suggest a relationship with the reader
- layout of cover-main story headings often use the largest font size; feature items are usually at the top of the cover; graphics and icons are used to highlight key stories.

'win' and 'free' placed at top of cover to catch reader's attention

'No.1 girls' mag' used as icon; promotional statement linked to Dolly title at the top

left side of cover shows busy, varied and topical story titles to attract interest

bulimia, gatecrashers, dumped by sms, liking the same guy—all issues of interest to target audience

slanted story headlines, some with 3D shading behind them, suggest dynamic action

green colour reserved for more formal 'report' and SMS text stories

'awesome' summeremotive words catch attention and larger font size grabs interest

palm tree graphic suggests tropical summer holidays



arrows and cut-out graphics direct attention to bonus items inside

ticks are active *icons* with hand-drawn shading to suggest immediacy

The biggest magazine ever printed was the March 2002 issue of Paris Gallery. It weighed 10 kilos, measured 67 cm **x** 98 cm and was printed for the Dubai Shopping Festival.

top of magazine is important, with focus on title and face of model looking at reader

> high-gloss cover with bright colours attracts attention and suggests quality and sophistication

bright reds, pinks and yellows attract female readership

quotation marks add authenticity to real-life stories

model shows ideal summer fashion look for clothes, hair, makeup and accessories

use of first name only suggests familiarity with the celebrity

multiple headings advertise busy, high-interest, jam-packed magazine

exclamation marks are symbols of emphasis, suggesting standout messages that must be noticed

The most expensive magazine ever was an issue of *Visionaire* magazine, which a collector paid US\$5000 to buy. It came in its own expensive Louis Vuitton carry-case

Maq appeal

A magazine will appeal to regular readers by offering to:

- give solutions to problems and an escape from everyday difficulties
- provide tips and hints about popular topics or products
- confirm readers' views about issues or beliefs
- explore other people's lives and interests
- make life positive and enjoyable for readers and make them feel valued.

questions activities tasks

1 Mag magazine

Bring some popular magazines to class or look at the three magazine covers on page three. Use The cover look guide in this chapter to complete these tasks for your selection of covers.

- a List three cover features that show who the target audience is.
- **b** Find examples of emotive language, icons or graphics used to highlight the stories inside the magazine.
- c Explain how the font style and size work to advertise different stories.
- d How do the choices of colour and layout catch the reader's attention?
- e Use the Mag appeal guide in this chapter to help you briefly explain how this cover is appealing to its target audience.
- **f** Does the cover reveal any **biases** in this magazine (favouring one cultural group or gender, or emphasising particular values or aspirations)? If so, explain why these biases exist in this magazine.

2 Graphic design team

You have been commissioned to create a cover for a new magazine (this could be a class competition).

- a Identify your target audience and its characteristics.
- **b** Brainstorm a title and decide on five to eight possible cover story ideas. Choose the best one to be your magazine's lead story.
- c Produce your cover layout by sketching a professional mock-up for display or by using desktop publishing software.
- d Give a short class presentation, explaining how the decisions you have made will ensure that your cover appeals to your target audience.

3 Working undercover

Now your task is to design a magazine cover that subverts or undermines the values and assumptions you commonly see in one magazine style.

- a Choose a common magazine audience and style, such as teenage girls and fashion or young men and cars.
- **b** Create your own undercover magazine cover that satirises or parodies the typical values and assumptions made about this target audience and their favourite magazines.

You'll find excellent real-life examples of this type of satire and parody in the popular Mad Magazine.

sample pages only

... New mag issue on the next page ... inside the world of magazine advertising ... New mag iss