

Examiners' Report
June 2019

GCE English Literature 9ET0 02

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Introduction

This year an extra 15 minutes was added on to the timing of the paper. This appears to have had the desired effect of allowing candidates more time to plan their responses, select relevant textual material from their chosen novels and shape their answers. Most candidates made excellent use of their additional time, with some extremely high quality work being seen in all questions. Examiners noted that more candidates than in previous years had spent time writing meaningful plans which fed into their responses and led to successful and engaging essays which tended to make connections between the texts confidently and fluently. Fewer candidates appeared to have run out of time and truncated their essays than in previous years.

There were some responses which were substantially longer than seen in previous examinations; this did not always result in better answers as they had a tendency to be less focused on the specific question being answered. Shorter essays which were concise, focused and always relevant were often able to achieve Level 5 marks.

Responses were seen for all questions and all 24 texts, although *What Maisie Knew* was very rarely seen. Science and Society remained the most popular theme, with question 7 seeing the most responses by a significant margin. *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Frankenstein* and *Never Let Me Go* were very popular texts in this theme grouping. Women and Society and The Supernatural also saw large numbers of responses (particularly *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *Dracula*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) while Crime and Detection was the least frequently attempted theme.

In all themes the full range of marks was seen, with some candidates in every question being awarded marks at the top of Level 5. Very few Level 1 responses were seen in any question or theme.

Across all 12 questions some excellent work was seen, and candidates were adept at meeting the requirements of all 4 of the assessment objectives, synthesising these seamlessly and taking an integrated approach. It was very rare to see a candidate who had failed to discuss relevant contextual factors (AO3) or to make connections and comparisons between their two chosen texts (AO4); these were the two assessment objectives which had seen slightly weaker performance in previous series. Most candidates were able to make contexts and connections central to their work, and to refer to these throughout the essay rather than treating them as separate elements of the essay. Students had clearly been very well prepared for this exam and demonstrated impressive subject knowledge and understanding of their studied novels.

Almost all candidates were able to discuss authorial craft (AO2). The best responses seen were able to comment on specific examples and patterns of language chosen by authors to create specific meanings, and to evaluate the different ways in which these could be interpreted. Weaker answers tended to focus solely on analysing individual words, often misapplying grammatical terms (nouns, verbs and adjectives were frequently confused) or using terminology which did not necessarily help them to think about meanings or indeed to illustrate the point being made. While this word level analysis is, of course, a valid approach and can be very fruitful in discussions of particular effects created by the author, they were often taken out of the context of the longer novels and led to misunderstandings or questionable interpretations. It also sometimes led to undue focus on a very narrow portion of the text - a few words in a single chapter, for example, and did not demonstrate the candidates' wider knowledge of the novels. Higher level candidates broadened out from word level analysis to consider the nuances of techniques such as structure, language, genre, perspective, narrative voice, themes, settings and style.

When writing about the contexts of their chosen texts, most candidates were able to make links between the context and the writer's craft, considering how context had influenced the production,

reception or development of the novels. Particularly with historical novels (such as *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *The Little Stranger*, *The Color Purple*, *Wuthering Heights* or *Atonement*), centres might consider emphasising the difference between the historical setting and the social/historical context at the time of writing, and considering why a writer might have chosen a particular time setting. This was generally well done by students studying novels set in the future (particularly *The Handmaid's Tale*). In the middle levels, candidates tended to generalise when writing about contextual factors. It should be noted that as with today's society, in most historical periods there existed a multiplicity of views and public debates, rather than a single position on religious, social or ethical issues. For example, to argue that Mary Shelley simply feared science and supported religion is to miss a lot of the nuances and subtleties of *Frankenstein*, which considers multiple views and ideas without an obviously didactic message. Candidates who wrote about the ambiguities and possible interpretations of the novel were meeting the requirement of Level 5 to critically evaluate and show sophisticated understanding of their texts, and thus were likely to score highly. Fewer candidates than in previous series were reliant solely on the biographical contexts of their authors, and this led to much more effective and relevant use of contextual information. A number of candidates usefully referred to the literary contexts and the critical reception of texts as part of their discussion of contexts.

Connections and comparisons between texts was very well dealt with, with most responses interweaving these throughout the essay. Very few candidates discussed their texts entirely separately and most moved between the two texts with ease. The best comparative essays considered a number of different ways of connecting the two texts; rather than simply suggesting that the two writers considered the same idea or had the same intention, they looked at ways of connecting the writers' craft through their use of language, settings, narrative voice, and of connecting the contextual influences of different texts. Occasionally students used the language of comparison without going into detail; discourse markers such as 'similarly' or 'in contrast' are of course helpful in a comparative essay, but need to be followed up with a meaningful discussion of what that similarity or difference actually is. Too often the point of connection was left implicit, while better responses delved into the nuances of what made the novels similar or different to each other, and the ways in which writers had achieved these effects.

A handful of candidates answered using two modern texts (most frequently *Never Let Me Go* and *The Handmaid's Tale* from the Science and Society theme). Centres should note that this paper requires that one of the two texts studied must be a novel written before 1900, therefore candidates who fail to meet this requirement are unable to access the full range of marks. It is permissible to answer on two 19th century texts, which can be an interesting way to make links between texts through the lens of social and historical context; *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula* is a popular combination in the Supernatural section.

Question 1

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts make use of settings'

Stronger answers for this question engaged with the ways settings were used by the writers, often considering their significance to the narrative, symbolic meanings and the ways in which they are used to create specific atmospheres or to create sympathy for characters. Discussion of the ways in which settings could provide solace, safety or oppress individual characters were often successful.

Hard Times and *Atonement* was a popular combination and these novels were often written about with great success. There was often perceptive comment on Dickens' use of the contrasting settings of Coketown and the circus as a vehicle for communicating political messages, and McEwan's commentary on class divisions using the Tallis family home and the battlefields of Dunkirk. There was also some excellent work linking settings to freedom and imagination, including interesting analysis of the Tallis family house and the circus as places where Briony's imagination and Sissy Jupe's emotions were unrestricted. This was contrasted with the stark industrial settings of Coketown, Dickens' school and the adult world as restrictive and repressive.

Weaker responses tended to list or describe settings in the novels without considering their narrative function. Some candidates struggled to link settings to the wider themes and ideas being discussed in the novels, or to consider the effects of different settings on the meanings of the texts.

Candidates answering on *The Color Purple* were generally less successful at identifying specific settings, tending to comment on the American South more generally. This meant that many candidates found the selection of specific textual details in support of their points more difficult. More successful answers considered a range of specific settings within the novel and what these signified, such as: the Olinkan village as a vehicle for expanding Celie's conception of Blackness and developing pride in her heritage; the setting of the Juke joint and its influence on the relationship between Shug Avery and Celie; Mr. ____'s house as a symbol of Celie's domestic servitude and the different houses Celie inhabits as symbols of stages of her journey to self-actualisation.

This essay on *Hard Times* and *Atonement* achieved Level 5 marks of 18 for AO1 and 2 and 19 for AO3 and 4.

A total of 37 out of 40.

The novel "Hard Times", by Charles Dickens, explores the fictional city of Coketown, where the population works industrially for the collective good and regard the state of society as more important than any single individual, as part of a utilitarian philosophy. The novel "Atonement" by Ian McEwan, presents how one girl's overactive imagination can lead to the condemnation of an innocent man, who becomes a victim of both the legal system and the early 19th century social hierarchy where the ^{upper class} dominated those below them. Although these two novels both depict very different storylines, they both effectively utilise settings in similar ways, namely through representing the characteristics of those living within a particular setting, reflecting the novels' respective respective ideologies through settings, and illustrating how various settings are subsequently used to rebel against these social constraints.

It is undeniable that the two texts similarly make use of various settings in order to exemplify and emphasise certain character traits for the reader. This representation can be immediately observed with

The character of Mr Bomberby in "Hard Times", whose house has his name ^{with} "upon a brazen plate, and with a round brazen char handle underneath it, like a brazen full stop". This tridic repetition of the adjective "brazen" reflects Bomberby's boisterous nature, as well as his arrogance, which enhances the description of his character as possessing "unlike beautifulness". This is further exemplified by his "snug little estate", where he "grows and bears in the flower garden" with "demonstrative humility". The ^{emphatic} use of the adjective "demonstrative", in contrast with the noun "humility", reveals ^{the} ~~the~~ Bomberby's personal vanity as well as indicates his duplicitous nature when it comes to his public façade. ~~The~~ One man possessing these two properties may have been shocking to working class men in the 19th century, who would often barely afford food for their families however this can be explained by the fact that, in the Victorian age, the top 1.5% of society owned 30% of all wealth. This use of setting to highlight personality traits is also used in "Atonement", where Briony's room is "a shrine to her controlling demon". This adjective "controlling" connotes the exacting and precise nature of Briony herself, whilst the sinister and haunting connotations of the noun "demon" anticipates the attermost consequences that this fault of her character will cause. Moreover further allusion fitting in this way with the character of Cecilia, whose bedroom is "a stew of unbound books, unfolded clothes, unmade beds, unemptied ashtray". The repeated repetition of these verbs create a semantic field of disorder and chaos, which serves to represent her own confused mental state regarding her feelings towards Robbie, as well as reflecting her anger at the injustice of a patriarchal education.

system, where Girton (the college at Cambridge) was one of only two allowing women in 1535, and would not permit them to obtain degrees until 1948. As such, the novels strikingly use setting to underline the specific traits of characters. However, whilst the two novels do both utilize setting in this way to a large extent, they differ in so far as the descriptions in "Abolition" always measure up to the traits of the inhabitants, whereas this is not always the case in "Hard Times". This is evidenced by the description of Stone Lodge where the Gradgrind family reside, which is described as "unpleasant, cast-iron, balanced and proud". This listing of adjectives warning of limited faith and infallibility is representative of the utilitarian philosophy which Mr Gradgrind seeks to impose on his children. This is emphasized in a letter from Charles Dickens to Knight, in which he said utilitarians are "seeing figures and averages and nothing else". However, this principle of fact is undermined by one of the inhabitants, Maria, who despises that, "I have such unmanageable thoughts that they will wander." The use of this subjective "unmanageable" directly contrasts with the Hermetic field of order and certainty indicated by the description of the house, therefore suggesting that these representations may not always be accurate in "Hard Times".

The novel's novels further use setting in a similar way regarding their exploration of the repressive ideologies they both respectively present, as certain locations become emblematic of these particular views. This can be seen in "Hard Times", when Dickens describes a "plain, bare, unattractive vault of a classroom". This austere interior

of subjective events to reflect the dullness and banality of a utilitarian philosophy, whilst the noun "cell" implies that the school acts as a prison, preventing the creative autonomy of students. This would have been a realistic scenario in the Victorian era, as at this time, there was no fixed curriculum, meaning that utilitarians were free to impose their ideologies on students. This symbolism of repression is similarly expressed in "Atonement" as Robbie evokes the wretchedness of prison, describing "the narrow bed under a dim electric light, waiting for nothing". The usage of the adjectives "narrow" and "dim" expose the degradation and insufficiency of the prison system, whilst the juxtaposition between the present participle "waiting" and the noun "nothing" reveal the existential pointlessness of being a wrongly convicted prisoner in a flawed justice system. However, whilst the novels are similar in their depiction of repressive ideologies, they differ regarding their messages as "Heretics" is far more politically oriented, whereas "Atonement" also explores social stigmas. This can be observed in "Atonement", when Robbie acknowledges, "it was inappropriate, at the beginning of the night, to turn away from his workers and start a private conversation". The word this adjective "inappropriate" reveals the arbitrary nature of superficial social behaviour, suggesting that the characters are trapped in a facade of politeness and civility. However, as the character in question is Marshall, he must believe himself to be above these restrictions as, the fact that the Second World War was the most profitable war in history, causing monopolists such as himself to get billions, meant he was almost untouchable as an upper

class gentlemen. These weaknesses are addressed on a much wider basis in "Hard Times", as Dickens states "you saw nothing in London but what was severely moralised". The use of the ^{adjective} ~~adverb~~ "severely" and "moralised" denotes the brutal condition that the working class endured with 62% of fabric mill workers that at this time having TB, due to the refusal of employers to implement safety regulations. Consequently, whilst both novels do use setting to portray repressive ideologies, "Hard Times" is much more political, whereas "Abraham" explores social class.

The final way in which the novels' compositions use setting, is how they similarly use it to symbolise rebellion against these conventional repressive ideologies. This can be observed in "Abraham", where "a great war in a library was wode for several eekes". The imagery of the noun "library" with the adjective "deserted" reflects a total rejection of social behaviour, one made even more shocking by the fact that pre-market for was largely banned until the 1920s in the USA in 1929. This rebellion is also denoted in "Hard Times"; as Gradgrind observes "his own metaphysical brains peeping with all her might" at the circus, "and his own mathematical Thomas abraded himself on the ground". These parent participle "peepis" and "abraded" evoke an image of shame and nervousness as they witness their utilitarian upbringing, one which caused John Shrewt Mill to have a mental breakdown at the age of 20 in 1826, much like his wife. However, once again, there was contrast in their use

of setting, as Dickens attempts to promote a didactic political message, whereas "Abraham" is just shocking due to social conventions. This can be seen in "Abraham", as, at the funeral, Leitch "killed off her ruffles, unbuttoned her blouse". These verbs describing removal of clothing would have caused great controversy in early 19th century England, but were only shocking due to this rejection of typical social behaviour. Conversely, in "Hard Times", Dickens writes against the entire political ideology, as he describes "glazed and framed upon the wall... was another Pegasus - a herald one". This allusion to a mythical creature from Greek mythology undermines the entire utilitarian philosophy of fact and certainty, with Dickens using this pre-imbued social meaning of circus people in the same way that John Ruskin did. As a result, whilst the two texts both use setting to explore rebellion to repressive ideologies, "Abraham" explores a rampage of typical social behaviours, whereas "Hard Times" didactically writes against a political movement.

Overall, the two texts similarly utilize setting in a multi-faceted approach, primarily using them to encapsulate the qualities of the inhabitants, represent repressive ideologies and subsequent acts of rebellion against them. The fundamental difference lies in the didactic message of each text, with "Hard Times" using setting to convey the horrors of utilitarianism, as well as promoting creativity, whereas "Abraham" targets more specific social stigmas and subsequently subverts them.



While its introduction is rather general, this essay makes very good points about the ways settings are used to represent ideologies, wider societal views and to highlight aspects of character. The comparison of Bounderby's house and Cecilia and Briony's bedrooms makes thoughtful connections through language analysis and symbolic meanings. In places, the use of grammatical terminology does not really add anything to the analysis which follows, and the essay would perhaps be slightly more fluent without it.



Don't use literary terminology unless it is relevant to your point and you can say something about how the writer has used the feature to create meanings.

Question 2

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present changing relationships.'

This was the more popular question for this theme and led to some very interesting responses. The best answers engaged closely with the presentation of *changes* that various relationships underwent. Weaker responses tended to simply describe relationships, or occasionally relationships which changed within the novels, but did not consider the *ways* in which these changes were presented, thus limiting the amount of analysis that could be done for AO2.

A common focus was on changes to sibling relationships such as Louisa and Tom in *Hard Times*, Celie and Nettie in *The Color Purple* and Briony and Cecilia in *Atonement*. Some answers also explored parental relationships in each of the novels, particularly those answering on *What Maisie Knew*. Romantic relationships such as Cecilia and Robbie in *Atonement* and Celie and Shug in *The Color Purple* also led to some interesting comparisons. The most successful responses were able to link these changes within relationships to changing political and social thought, for example examining Dickens' criticism of utilitarianism using the changes to Mr Gradgrind and Louisa's relationship.

Contextual comments were generally well integrated and relevant to the specific question. Candidates answering on *Atonement* were slightly hampered by an over-reliance on social class as a context at the expense of considering a range of contextual factors.

This essay on *Hard Times* and *The Color Purple* was placed in Level 5 on both assessment grids.

It was given 19 for AO1 and 2, and 18 for AO3 and 4

A total of 37 marks.

Both "Hard Times" by Charles Dickens and "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker explore a variety of changing relationships, especially within female friendships in their respective novels. "Hard Times," as a contemporary industrial novel that Dickens used as a lens to highlight the terrible impact of the industrial revolution and Utilitarianism on society, uses female friendships ~~to~~ and their changing nature to allegorically represent the worrying changes Dickens saw in society, as well as explore the importance of female relationships. Similarly Walker's post-modernist epistolary novel focuses heavily on the double oppression of sexism and racism on Black Women in the Deep South of America in the first half of the twentieth century. As a Womanist, Walker believes in the uplifting power of female friendships and their ability to help Black women fight their oppression, so like Dickens, she too explores the vital importance of these relationships.

~~In the beginning of both novels,~~ ^{both} In the beginning of both novels the writers explore the ~~beginning~~ newly formed relationships between two contrasting female characters. In "Hard Times" this is ^{Sissy} ~~Edith~~ and ^{Louisa} ~~Edith~~ and for "The Color Purple" Celie and Sofia. Firstly, Dickens shows Louisa and Sissy's contrasting personalities in the first book during a lesson. Sissy, in Dickens' own words represents the "Power of affection" in the novel and

act as a symbol for imagination, a quality that as a writer and forward thinking philanthropist, Dickens placed great importance in. She says she can't tell if a "nation" is "prosperous" until she knows "who had got the money;" here Sissy demonstrates absolute compassion and understands that prosperity is related to wealth distribution, not just the total sum. In contrast Louisa is a model of Gradgrind's new school, and allegorically a symbol of the destructive power of Utilitarianism, a new social theory that focused on the Greatest Happiness for the Greatest Number at the expense of compassion, and imagination and individuality. She calls Sissy's compassion a "great mistake" where the qualifier "great" emphasises Louisa's belief that "fifty millions of money" means a "nation" is "prosperous." Allegorically, the Sissy-Louisa relationship at the beginning of the novel shows the stark differences between the two philosophies that the girls each represent and Louisa's teaching to Sissy symbolises the attempt of the Utilitarian School System to squish out imagination. Similarly, Walker has two contrasting characters. Like Sissy, Celie is a quiet and compassionate character whereas Sofia breaks the subservient Black Woman stereotype that ~~was~~ existed at the time by "fixing the roof" and leaving her husband Harpo to give "the children they baths. Sofia is also seen to be wearing an old pair of Harpo's 'pants,' which physically represents her rejection of society's gender norms, an idea which as a

Womanist, Walker wanted to promote. In contrast Celie describes herself as "earth," especially through Mr. —'s eyes, which dehumanizes her and suggests she is there to be inherently trampled upon and is worth no more than literal dirt. Here Celie fulfills the stereotype of the time, as she is crushed by the sexism and abuse of her husband. Like Louisa and Sissy, who represent two opposing ideals, Celie and Sophia portray two contrasting women, but show a relationship between them is possible.

As a result of the contrasting nature of these women, both novels explore the conflict within their relationships.

However since both writers were keen to promote the importance of female relationships, for Dickens because he was concerned with the lives of the marginalized and for Walker it was an important exploration of the power of Womanism and female unity, both writers ensure the relationships between these women is salvaged. In "The Color Purple" major conflict rises between Celie and Sophia when Celie tells Harpo to "beat her." Although this seems out of character for Celie, it seems to derive from her embarrassment at the fact that Sophia "pity me." This same idea is explored in "Hard Times" when Sissy looks at Louisa with "pity" and "horror" once she learns that Louisa is to marry Mr Bounderby, because she understands the miserable life Louisa has condemned herself to. Furthermore, Celie's monosyllabic language in "beat her" coupled with the use of a strong imperative "beat" shows her

Compulsive and spiteful attitude, or a naive woman jealous of another's power. In contrast, it is the pitiful silence and a knowing "look (ed)" shared between the two women that ruptures their relationship. This contrast could exist because Walker explores a post-slavery culture where Black women were still without a voice, so as a didactic writer, Walker warns against the power of language and how it can "beat" down on other women. On the other hand, Sissy's look of "pity" stems from a conversation in the first Book, where Louisa tells us Sissy's father was in "love" with her mother, but her "wonder" on the subject is described as a "banished creature." Here the use of "banished" suggests Louisa's questions about love are a great taboo and this emphasized by "creature," which implies her "wonder" and "interest" are foreign, alien and dangerous. With this knowledge of Louisa's ^{lack} ~~misunder~~ of comprehension of "love," Sissy's "pity" is hugely powerful, but since "love" is a taboo topic in the Grandin household, since Utilitarianism didn't put emphasis on natural sentiment, it can't be spoken about. So the silence looms over them and puts a "distance" between these two contrasting women. Therefore, both the conflicts in the two relationships stem from some form of pity, but only Celie can articulate her anger since violence toward women, particularly unobsequious wife-like logic, was accepted at the time.

However, both relationships in the two novels are mended. For

example, after their confrontation Celie and Sofia in "The Color Purple" decide to make "quilt pieces" from the "messed up curtains" Sofia and Harpo rip during a fight. Throughout the novel the "quilt" is used to represent female friendships and symbolize female unity and bonds. To use "messed up curtains" to make the "quilt" symbolize how Celie and Shug are willing to use their past experiences and mistakes to build a stronger friendship rather than allow Sofia's "pity" and Celie's jealousy to harm their relationship. Additionally, towards the end of the novel when Celie begins to make "pant," when she sends a pair down to Sofia it symbolize a further acceptance of Sofia's strong and unique personality that doesn't fit into societal norms for a twentieth century Black American woman, since "pant" mirror Sofia's wearing of Harpo's old "pant" in the earlier letters.

Similarly, Louisa and Sissy in "Hard Times" begin to build a stronger relationship when Louisa leaves Bounderby and realize that Gradgrind's Utilitarian schooling left her with a "wilderness" instead of a "garden" in her mind, suggesting she feel barren and empty. By the third book, Dickens describe Sissy's impact on Louisa as a "beautiful light" that "shone" upon "the darkness" of Louisa. Firstly "light" is often associated with truth and hopefulness, so this simile subtly suggests that Sissy is a symbol of hope for Louisa and has the capacity to make her "darkness," which represents her inner turmoil. This is a marked change from the beginning of the novel, where it was Louisa:

teaching Sissy about "prosperous nation(s)" to the third book where Louisa realizes her imagination has been "starved" and Sissy is the only one who can help. Allegorically, this changing relationship could represent some kind of harmony between imagination and the new school system, since Dickens wanted to promote the importance of childhood and imagination, but also the need for girls to be educated as well.

Therefore, both the Sissy-Louisa and Celie-Sofia relationships change over the course of the novels. Both these relationships act on metaphorical levels too, since Louisa's acceptance of Sissy's "light" at the end represents her recognition for the importance of imagination, whereas in "The Color Purple" Celie's wearing of ^{and} making "pants" for Sofia represent her acceptance of Sofia's unbridled strength and existence outside societal norms for Black Women at the time. It is also worth noting that the structure of both novels emphasizes the importance in these changing relationships. In "Hard Times" Sissy learns from Louisa about "money" and prosperity and Louisa learns about "love" in the first book "Jawing," suggesting these ~~ideas~~ ^{ideas} are planted in the heads of the two girls and by both the third "gathering," the effect of their relationship and what they have learnt comes to light. Similarly, since Walker writes through the medium of letters Celie's writing about "beat her" reads

as a confession to God of her sin and her pride in describing all her "pain" to Nettie in the ^{later} ~~next~~ ~~following~~ letters show her ~~own~~ celebration of Sofia and the ^{gender} ~~gender~~ uniqueness that she represents.

In conclusion, both authors use changing female relationships, including their difference and conflicts as well as their resolution and acceptance of each other to show that to better society and women's lives, women must work together, help one another and celebrate the good in one another. Overall changing relationships is a powerful theme throughout both novels that helps the female characters in each novel develop, grow and learn.



From the start, this essay integrates all of the assessment objectives, building comparisons and contextual factors into the fabric of the essay from the introduction onwards. By choosing to narrow the focus of the essay to relationships between women, the candidate is able to focus on precise textual details and to consider the changing nature of these relationships and what they are used to represent. There is pertinent use of literary terminology which enhances the analysis of the ways in which the writers have created meanings. The analysis of Sofia in *The Color Purple* on page 2 is a particularly good example of AO2 analysis which engages closely with the meanings of the selected examples and links this closely to contextual factors. In considering the initial relationships between the character pairs, the conflict that occurs between them and how this is resolved, the argument is successfully developed.



If the question is very broad, it can be helpful to choose one or two key ideas to focus on.

Question 3

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present interaction between characters from different cultures.'

The best responses to this question were able to deal with the whole of the question stem, considering cultural differences and the ways in which these affected interactions between characters.

Candidates either focused on relationships between individual characters from different cultures such as Aziz and Fielding, Huck and Jim, or on relationships between different groups of characters from different cultures, for example the Indian and British characters in *A Passage to India*, or the colonisers and the Congolese in *Heart of Darkness*. Both of these approaches were potentially successful, as long as the focus remained on parts of the texts where the characters interacted, rather than a study of each character or group in isolation. Less strong answers tended to discuss the cultures of different characters rather than their interactions. This was particularly an issue in responses on *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, where candidates often focused on the relationship between Huck and Jim, but few considered the ways in which the characters interacted.

Contexts were very well dealt with for this question, with race, colonisation and imperialism, slavery, the Windrush generation and genre being discussed frequently, as well as socio-historical and biographical details. Contextual links were often well integrated and considered in terms of their impact on the novels' construction. Candidates were able to compare the different contexts effectively and, in some cases, draw thoughtful conclusions, for example, regarding the portrayal of race in literature and the hypocrisy of imperialism.

AO2 was also particularly strong, often being used as a starting point for comparison. Narrative voice and perspective, linguistic differences and presentation of settings were all thoughtfully used to make links between the texts. Candidates appeared to know their texts particularly well and to be able to select appropriate and wide-ranging examples to support their ideas.

This essay on *Heart of Darkness* and *The Lonely Londoners* was placed at the bottom of Level 5.

It was given a mark of 17 in each assessment grid, making a total of 34.

The backbone of both Sam Selvon and Joseph Conrad's books, 'The Lonely Londoners' and 'Heart of Darkness' respectively, is the clashing of two worldviews, two ways of life and two continents. Displacement is central to both, and it is by introducing characters - manifestations of their wider culture - to their counterparts that both differences and similarities are exposed. The process of character interaction exposes the universal human condition behind the facades ~~that~~ that have been carefully crafted. Though, such facades do, in fact, contain truth in themselves, they are as thick as the London 'fog', tainting the psyche with the 'black' soot of progression. Interaction initiates, in both cases, psychological deterioration. Yet beneath ~~the~~ it is this very 'gloom' that brings all characters together. Conrad's approach is a more pessimistic one, revealing that an almost nihilistic, lack of objective

moral 'kernel' is a truth shared by all humans, whilst Selvon exposes the benefit of social integration, and the fragility of the self-imposed barriers that divide us.

When the characters from separate cultures interact, in both 'Heart of Darkness' and 'The Lonely Londoners', they are first confronted with a facade - an artificial construct of the way in which the party wishes to be perceived. In 'Heart of Darkness' this seen in the construct of Brussels as a 'whited sepulchre', a mere guise for the rot underneath. The building, that Marlow describes, is merely a ~~microcosm~~ microcosm for the wider lies of Belgian colonial propaganda. King Leopold II's colonial expedition, supposedly as lavish as the hunt for 'El Dorado', was dubbed 'The Sacred Mission of Civilization'. The impression, here, is a noble one. European interaction with Congo is one of 'progression'. And yet, the truth reveals just the opposite. They bear the 'sword' before the 'torch', violence it was no holy mission 'just robbing with violence.' Such has been the case for all of the supposed 'progressive' ~~civilizations~~, ~~from the Romans~~. The supposed railways - manifestations of progression - lay 'on its back' dead as the carcass of some animal. Similarly, in Selvon's novel, Cop walks behind a railway, a mere shadow of the facade of imperial progression. The West-Indian migrant community were ~~among~~ among London, but they were only seen at night. Though, the facade projected by Britain was not only outward,

aimed at the rest of the world, but was also inward. Unlike the more vocal, outward expressions of racism seen in America, the British employed 'diplomacy,' racism under the guise of politeness. Such is the case when Galahad, 'putting on the old English accent,' interact with a white mother and her child, only to receive 'a sickly sort of smile' as 'she p[re]tends the child away' and 'walk on.' There is a sheen of supposed decency. Other forms of racist action could be seen in the form of Redmanism, in which migrants were charged extortionate rents on housing. Rather than an outward rejection, there is an inward confrontation.

The result of such falsity is that of psychological deterioration, as character interaction acts as a catalyst for an almost violent level of introspection, causing a total fragmentation of character itself. In 'The Lonely Londoner' this is most starkly depicted by Galahad talking to the colour Black, as if it is a person; frantically exclaiming or questioning why it 'can't be blue, or red or green.' Such can be seen as the triggering of what Frantz Fanon labelled the 'nervous condition'; a sense of inferiority and blame that one puts on themselves for the negative actions of others. Du Bois goes further to describe the sense of 'double consciousness' felt by the black man, a sense of dual identity, a split between how they

want to be perceived and how they feel they should be perceived in a white world, that could not be better expressed than by the mental separation in Galahad's psyche. In 'Heart of Darkness' such mental deterioration as a result of interaction with the supposed 'savages' in the Congo has profound effects on both Marlow and Kurtz. Kurtz transforms from 'pride' to 'abomination', and Marlow from fresh faced to 'yellow complexion' with 'sullen cheeks' who 'sits away from the others.' ~~Both~~ Both experiences, and the 'horror' that they encountered blur into nightmarish recollections of 'heads' on sticks, 'red-eyed devils' and a steen of hellish magic. Even the man who makes Marlow 'sign some document' takes the role of a 'papier mache Mephistopheles', a Faustian-esque devilish figure. The entire structure of their journey becomes a parallel to the levels of hell in Dante's 'Inferno', interaction with characters become stepping stones to the 'heart' of this hell - the 'Heart of Darkness.'

Yet, for all of the psychological deterioration that takes place, both, in their own way, also create a sense of unification between characters. Selvon more optimistically and Conrad more pessimistically. In 'The Lonely Londoners', integration is central, and it is through the episodic, polyphonic structure that different forms of character interaction and integration are explored, in a Calypsonian, rhythmic

and almost musical manner - a method we will touch on later. Ham, for example, can be seen as a 'conquering' figure, who adopts affected British speech in what the 'boys' later mockingly call 'ladsch'. He is the most 'English' of the migrants. Tanya, perhaps the most authentic, manages to integrate trust-based, West-Indian 'credit' mechanisms into a British supermarket. She is, arguably, the most successfully integrated, despite the mockery of her 'straw hat' upon arrival. But what Selvon artfully does is make a parody of British perceptions of West-Indians. Like Sparrow's controversial song 'Congo Man', in which he sings of black men literally devouring white women, Selvon makes his characters sexually active and even violent, barbarically 'eating' 'pigeons'. This, the most extreme perception of the migrant, allows for a reading that sees the ridicule of the white English perception, ^{a parody of the superiority of the English.} the former integrates the two cultures in his use of broken, Jamaican English, most notably brave in the summer stream of consciousness which ~~acts~~ ^{seems like} as a solo improvisation of a Afro-Caribbean musical piece. He sacrifices total authenticity, using English that is still legible for the standard reader, in order to enhance marketability. There ^{is} ~~are~~, this way, no hierarchy of dialects.

Conrad enters cultures in a more pessimistic way. We are

all, at heart, savages. 'Butcher' and 'Policemen' merely add layers of the 'fog' of administration to help distance ourselves from the violence of existence. We live 'in the flicker'; our state was once 'savagery' to the Roman, who faced the synthetic 'cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile and death' that we are now, apparently, so distant from. The 'haze' of moral clarity, our nihilist spirit state, a need of 'ritual' to keep language and meaning together, or what ties character from across cultures, and even across time periods. We are all, universally 'enlightened' by darkness, all 'Buddha's' 'without long flowers'.

The interaction between characters of different cultures results in the destruction of facades, subsequent psychological deterioration, but also a ultimate unity of the human experience. The 'black and white' 'boxes' (dominances) played with by the Accountant and Lawyer at the start of 'Heart of Darkness'; and similarly divisive contact of the very 'pagan hege' at the end are mere barbed for the blur and haze that the true universal exp human experience has to offer. The rhythmic polyphonic structure of Selvon's novel under modernism with a casual, oratory delivery. The sense of collectivism is in the polyphonic means by which Selvon tells his story, caution the the isolated reality of 'little worlds' that

the characters live in, allowing 'old talk' and narrative to become unifying forces. It seems, by means of expression, that the characters may not be so 'lonely' after all.



This essay puts forward a sophisticated argument, that interaction between characters from different cultures results in psychological deterioration, and represents a wider clash between cultures, but that ultimately these interactions also serve to show the universality of human nature.

'Interactions' are discussed in several ways. The sections discussing interactions between specific characters are very focused. Those considering interactions between cultures and the interaction between characters' actions and others' perceptions of them are perhaps less sharply tailored towards the question, but have merit and relevance nonetheless.

There is a slight loss of focus on interactions between characters towards the end of the essay which prevents the essay from gaining a higher mark in Level 5.



Make sure that every point you make is directly relevant to the question and you don't go off topic.

Question 4

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present the search for new experience.'

Some students struggled to clearly identify what was meant by 'the search for new experience' and were therefore led to consider characters' experiences in general (rather than engaging with the idea of a search) or to have a rather loose interpretation of what constituted a 'new' experience. Better answers often considered the hopes and intentions of characters when beginning their search, and the disappointment experienced when these failed to materialise as expected.

More successful answers were able to link the search for new experience to the hopes of the Windrush generation in *The Lonely Londoners* and Huck's escape and journey in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Candidates who focused on the texts as quest narratives often scored highly, for example those who considered Adela and Mrs Moore's search for the 'real India' in *A Passage to India*, or looked at Marlowe or Huck's journeys along their respective rivers.

As with question 3, answers to this question often discussed a range of contextual factors with success, with interesting consideration of Belgian imperialism in the Congo, the scramble for Africa and the snobbery of the British Raj. However candidates were slightly less well focused on the writers' craft than in the other question, with some less able to pin down specific examples in the text and discuss how meanings were created by the writer through the use of specific techniques.

This essay on *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* was awarded 19 for AO1 and 2 and 20 for AO3 and 4.

A total of 39 out of 40 marks.

In Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, the two authors, through their inquisitive protagonists explore the search for new experience, though with subtly different resolutions. Indeed, this search for new experience, a search both authors enacted themselves in expeditions to the Congo in 1890 and to India in 1912 respectively, leaves the reader enamoured but, ultimately, perplexed by the "inconceivable mystery" or the Forsterian "middle" they are confronted by. Thus, this journey or quest for meaning at the heart of the colonial mission leaves the ~~narrator~~ narrative perspectives in a near constant state of paradoxical flux between understanding and the utter inability to. Yet, for Conrad, ~~his~~ his comment ~~that~~ upon confronting the colonial mission he'd so idolized - "I had not a thought in my head" - leads

naturally ~~to a~~ ~~total~~ ~~devotion~~ wholly "inconclusive" and pessimistic ~~is~~ message, Forster - linking to his ~~devotion~~ ~~to~~ belief in the importance of interpersonal experiences typified by his the maxim of his early career "only connect" - concludes on a similarly optimistic tone as the prophetic image of the militant Aziz emphatically denotes.

Firstly, the apprehension to this search for new, colonial experiences - though no less doubtful - is decidedly optimistic. Indeed, Conrad's opening description of London as he depicts the ~~wreath~~ rich history of exploration borne out of the Thames fits such an assessment. ~~as~~ ~~he~~ He mentions "Sir Francis Drake" and all the "great knight-errants of the sea" which have sailed out of London in search of new experiences - to bring a "torch" to the darkness. The ~~use~~ of mention of legendized ~~of~~ historical figures implies the rich glory associated with ~~explor~~ colonial exploration. Furthermore, by doing so, the reader is goaded to believe this story will be one of similar "philanthropic" glory. Yet, amidst the celebratory tone, there lies a subtle critique as he mentions the "commissioned Generals of the East India Fleet". The ~~is~~ ~~of~~ allusion to the East India Fleet, the same colonizers responsible for introducing British rule in India in 1858, implies the tainted history of colonial exploration; a history, as Conrad later

highlights, purely motivated by Greed. & Likewise, A Passage to India begins in a similarly paradoxical fashion as Chandrapore is described as both "unextraordinary" yet also, and to "not holy" yet the shy - the source of ~~the~~ ~~omnipotes~~ natural omnipotence - can grant "benediction". This state of paradoxical optimism continues with the arrival of Mrs. Moore who arrives in a "blur of trees". The word "blur", ~~is~~ implying, both sonically and in its meaning, a state of imprecision creates a pseudo-divine entrance for the mythical English Woman. Moreover, this is emphatically extended as this visual lack of clarity gives way to the clear statement of utter religious assurance: "God is here". Similarly, the Aunt in Heart of Darkness, is, too, highly optimistic or "triumphant" as she alludes to the incredible work Marlow will do "weaning the millions off their horrid ways". This, contextually, denotes the ~~then~~ ~~to~~ view of the colonial mission, within the ~~Zeitgeist~~ ^{at the time} of Conrad's writing just two years after the Diamond Jubilee, that the entire endeavour was a "philanthropic" mission. Ultimately, this optimism which precedes the search for new experience will give way to inconclusivity.

The two authors richly depict the search for new experience and the ~~subt~~ destructive confrontation with the colonial machine effectively. In *Heart of Darkness*, this confrontation with the artificers of colonisation leaves ~~him~~ Marlow unable to express coherently. He mentions the Manager → "who's smile was a 'door opening to darkness'". This subtle, though clear critique of the ~~still~~ attractive deception that fronted the "aggravated murder on a mass scale" is further extended in his negation of religious terminology as the colonialists are described as "faithless pilgrims". For ~~Forster~~ Forster, his critique is far more subtle & linking to his stature up to this point in his career as a chronicler of the English middle-class typified by novels such as *Howard's End*. He comments that the "ruling race contributed little more than bad teeth". Despite the seemingly innocent nature of the phrase a sinister truth of colonial exploitation belies it - one Forster was shocked and horrified by upon his visit in 1912. Importantly, this search for new experience is epitomised in ~~the~~ Adela's refrain - "I want to see the real India". Her confrontation with the phony pretence of colonial India in which her fiancé Remy "pretends" to live

Substandard musicals and "dressed up" like
are man of the English middle-class, leads to
the pivotal moment of the novel: the confrontation
with the "caves". Indeed this confrontation in
which the ominously sensual "polished walls"
of the cave enforce a state of transcendental
confusion leads to the essential plot construct of the
novel as Aziz is accused of rape. Moreover, for
Conrad, this confrontation comes in his meeting
with the "universal genius", yet, "hollow sham"-
Colonel Kurtz.

Importantly, it is the aftermath of these two
"inconclusive experiences" which provides the
ultimate meanings the two novels present.

The encounter with the "Bum" "eternally watchful"
yet ~~devoted~~ "bum" leads to the disintegration of
Mrs. Moore's innate devotion as she remarks that
"let there be light" amounts to "bum". This
notion, of the inexpressibility of words,
further denotes the evolution of Forster's prose
style into that of a modernist ~~as~~
he attempts to provide explanation of for the
"muddle" of human existence. Similarly, this
notion is emphatically implied in Kurtz's
final "gift" to the world: "The Horror! The Horror!"

The ~~sonic~~ sonically dolorous repetition of ~~the~~ internal assonance creates a ~~hollowness~~ hollow sonic texture to the phrase - thus ~~2~~ serving as a lasting and unavoidable indictment on the human condition. Importantly, as Kurtz concludes his life in the fashion of a ~~tragic~~ Shakespearean hero - "rehearsing a speech" - the "multitude of trees" wait "patiently". This description of impressive, stately and "eternal nature" denotes a central conclusion of both novels - that the actions of men fall insignificant in relation to the nature ~~the~~ which as a time will ^{again} come again when "trees care kings". Yet, it must be noted that the two novels conclude on dramatically different resolutions to their searches for new experiences. ~~For Conrad, we are told~~ For Marlow, his final act - to lie to Kurtz intended in regards to the man's final words - appears to ~~conclude~~ conclude the ultimate treachery as he upholds the lie of the colonial mission because the truth would be "too dark altogether". This malspirited use of words and his inability to ~~express~~ articulate the truth emphatically solidifies the triumph of ~~2~~ the "immense darkness" over man. However, ~~2~~ ~~for Forster~~ Forster's conclusion occupies a different tone. ~~As~~ Forster does not part with the tone of imprecision

that has characterized this search for the "real India" as Aziz, "hears not a sight, but a sound". This obscurity of the senses further solidifies the state of loss borne out of India's invasion by Britain. ~~But, in rejection of a lack of class~~ Moreover, the pseudo-homo-erotic tone which permeates in the final scene as Aziz and Fielding hold each other "affectionately", here ^{is} denotes the influence of Forster's marital love triangle with PC Bob Buckingham which he, importantly, described as a "wondrous muddle". Thus, this unrequited love expands to a national scale as Aziz in militant repose triumphantly claims "clear out all you Turans and Burtons". The emphatic conclusion of the novel from the doubt of confrontation to the ~~sure~~ assured confidence of Aziz's speech is reinforced by cyclical storytelling ~~as~~ as, like the ~~play's~~ novel's opening, the sky - the ultimate force of natural adjudication "speaks".

To conclude, the two novels follow the range of emotions and sentiments which arise from the search for new experiences within the colonial machine. Though the falsity of the "philanthropic pretence" which disguised the genocide ^{is} of 15 million Congreese under King Leopold's rule is

Wholly dissected and critiqued by Conrad, ^{Marlow's} ~~the novella's~~ ^{leads} final action - to uphold this lie - ~~renders~~ the reader into a further ~~perplex~~ confusion. Likewise, the near-constant ~~enigmatic~~ ~~confrontation~~ with the paradoxical nature of the "middle" of India leads to a similar conclusion. Yet, it is in Conrad's own writing where we can find a truly informative maxim. ~~or "mature wisdom"~~. As, rather than the "kernel itself", it is the "glow" which "envelopes the tale" ~~which provides~~ ~~true meaning~~ which arises from a search for new experiences, ~~which~~ which can, alone, provide ~~a joyful and~~ the "mature wisdom" that Marlow epitomizes.



This answer focuses well on the idea of a quest in search of meaning through new experiences, developing this line of argument by considering how these quests ultimately fail. The candidate makes apt links to the contexts of the authors and their own experiences in the introductory paragraph and goes on to consider a very wide range of social, historical and philosophical contexts.

While fluently and cohesively written, on occasion expression is a little verbose at the expense of clarity. Overall the points are subtly argued and evaluation of meaning is done constantly and across all four assessment objectives.



Don't treat the 4 assessment objectives as separate; your answer will read more fluently if you can take a more integrated approach.

Question 5

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present women.'

This was the more popular question in the Crime and Detection theme grouping, and most candidates were able to explore the presentation of women successfully.

This was particularly interesting when addressing the presentation of female criminals in *Lady Audley's Secret* and *The Murder Room*, that often led to thoughtful consideration of female stereotypes in literature as a contextual factor. Contextual comments about the role of women were occasionally rather simplistic, and did not always take into account differences of class and time period. For *Lady Audley's Secret* and *In Cold Blood*, there was much rich discussion of attitudes towards women's mental health, their vulnerabilities, and there was interesting comparison of Lady Audley's social climbing and the attack on the Clutter women as a symbol of the failure of the American Dream.

Candidates answering on *In Cold Blood* sometimes had difficulty in focusing only on women. A number chose to explore the feminine aspects of Perry's characterisation, that did not really address the terms of the question, which specified 'women' rather than 'femininity'. Those who focused on the presentation of the female victims, as well as the significance of Susan Kidwell to the narrative tended to produce more focused and perceptive responses.

The best responses had a clear line of argument about the ways writers had presented women, often analysing their texts through a feminist lens. Context was dealt with particularly well for the two pre-1900 texts, for example exploring the contemporary tensions around the emergence of the 'New Woman', however contexts were written about less securely for the modern novels. This was particularly the case for *In Cold Blood* where candidates tended to make generalised comments about society but not address specific contextual factors. Those who considered the additional sensitivities faced by Capote in writing about a real crime, and the blurred boundaries between fact and fiction wrote very thought-provoking essays about how, and why, their writers had crafted the female characters a certain way and often scored highly.

In both *Lady Audley's Secret* and *In Cold Blood* the character of women is frequently questioned particularly given their perceived innocence. While for Nancy and Berne Clutter this innocence may be genuine, Lady Audley's feigned innocence sees her successfully deceive the male characters in the novel leading to a ^{her committing} ^{even} more crimes. Women are also presented as inferior to men given the ^{broader} ^{broader} idea of the male as the breadwinner and the subsequent limitations that such patriarchy subjected women to - even in the perceived more liberal society of the mid-20th century America. The stereotype of female emotion is also explored partially through Lady Audley's mad outbreaks organically ^{mirroring} ~~paralleling~~ the hysterical cases of Nancy Egbert and Sue Lordwell upon ^{finding} ^{finding} Nancy (Clutter) dead, however, in the case of Lady Audley, this organically more a result of her makers.

Both novels explore the idea of female innocence which is particularly evident through the dualist "popular and pretty" character of Nancy who ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~practically~~ ^{practically} has "a Straight-A student, the president of her class, a leader in the A-H program and the Young Methodists League, a skilled cook, an excellent musician." The predominantly asyndetic listing of Nancy's many attributes not only serves to demonstrate the extent of her popularity and 'goodness', but also portrays her as being well-rounded and innocent with a room "Frosty as a bulletproof tank." This simile also has childish connotations suggesting that while Nancy is portrayed as extremely busy, she is a child at heart and a stereotypical 'girl' with "shiny chestnut hair (brushed in hundred strokes each morning)." This alludes to Nancy's more 'van' attributes, taking one to have her best - a stereotype of women at the time, the adjective 'shiny' perhaps referring not just Nancy's hair, but also her innocent, bubbly personality which Capte

~~reads~~ shapes. Similarly, Lady Audley is (at least initially) presented as a innocent, pretty, stereotypical woman, adhering to the perceived Victorian ideal (as cited by Virginia Woolf) of the 'Angel in the House'. The expectations of women to be beautiful inside and out as well as innocent and ^{virtually} ~~loyal~~ at home has never - although it is arguable that this label is perhaps more applicable to the character of Mary rather than Lady Audley. Mrs. Moore is rather flawed. When Lady Audley is first described she seems rather 'angelic' ^{with} as "everyone high and low united in declaring that Lucy Audley was the sweetest girl who ever lived." Braddon's use of the "superlative" 'sweetest' and the word 'every' serve to highlight somewhat hyperbolically highlight how 'perfect' Lucy Audley is. Similarly, George Tallboys describes his wife as being as kind "as the sun" and the light of heaven." This simile also highlights Helen Madden's perfection directly comparing Lady Audley to a heavenly 'angel' ~~and~~ while simultaneously conveying perfection and innocence. However, unlike Mary, Lady Audley is presented as ~~a~~ a genuinely almost perfect woman, Lady Audley's perfection is tainted. Victorians frequently associated people's ^(particularly women's) exterior looks as being a reflection of their interior virtue, despite knowing the revelation of Lady Audley's ~~from~~ Mary says, showing for a Victorian audience as Robert highlights how "your high youth and beauty, your grace and refinement, only make the horrible secret of your life more horrible." The juxtaposition of 'beauty' and 'horror' arguably demonstrates how Lady Audley has been defying convention through her lack of - virtue and Braddon could ~~possibly~~ be highlighting the flaws of the societal expectation of female perfection. ~~The deceptive~~ ~~aspect of~~ ~~it~~ Therefore there in both novels, women are presented as innocent and chaste, however, Lady Audley the antagonist of Lady Audley's secret past usurps these assumptions through her immorality and

her actions, effectively designating the 'Angel in the House'

Both novels also explore the idea of women being inferior to men, and frequently become dependent on male dominance for their survival. In both novels, all of the detectives are men as "a total of eighteen men were assigned to the case" demonstrating a clear superiority of men in the detective profession of the late 1950s. ~~As this is a true crime novel~~ As this novel is of the true crime genre and Capote claimed it to be 95% accurate, it is likely that he was depicting the truth surrounding the male dominance of the detective profession. Similarly in Lady Audley's Secret Clara Talboys states "If I were a man, I would go to Australia, and find him and bring him back." Braddon's employment of the phrase 'If I were a man' suggests a tone of almost resentment for poor Clara, to the fact that she is limited by her gender and ~~has a lot of disadvantage~~ Braddon as she was too "innocent and vulnerable as a woman to travel to Australia alone - she must be escorted by a man for her protection. Women were also dominated by men in the home with the male being the stereotypical "breadwinner" with married women in both novels abandoning their professions to marry. Lady Audley's life was always dependent on her father from the beginning with her "dementia half-pay treatment" father meaning that "from a very early age, I found out what it was to be poor," and this led to a subsequent assertion that "I learned that my ultimate fate in life depended on my marriage." She was "dependent" further contributes to the idea of female dependence on men, hence Lady Audley's subsequent marriage to "the London price" George Talboys and "the rich baronet." Similarly Lady Audley then gives up her profession as Mrs Dawson's "governess" in order to marry Sir Michael Audley (a match which elevated her as stated reminding the necessity

of a profession for survival). Similarly in *In Cold Blood* several women are seen to abandon their professions through marriage. Frequently to have all the children as Marie was a "former FBI stenographer" the word 'former' highlighting her past work in the past - most likely before her marriage. Similarly, Bonnie Quiller has no profession and her husband Nance sees her "even more dependent on her husband and she ~~must~~ be despite "enrolling as a student nurse" & "later, she had met and married Herb." & Also Male domination of the ~~workplace~~ workplace is also observable when the at the total "a woman repeats, the only one present, led Mrs. Hixson out of the courtroom" the fact that & this woman was "the only one present" implies that women were very much sidelined by men in the courtroom. Highlighting the presence of the other & all of the ~~other~~ other men were "all male" with little room for women, as Capote potentially calling for a wider acceptance of female workers in society - see similarly to Braden's depiction of Clara's desires,

Women in both novels are also being depicted as overly emotional, and a stereotype of women depicted over both the nineteenth and twentieth century novels. Lady Audley is presented as almost the epitome of female hysteria through her mad attacks such as the line "you have engaged - A MAD WOMAN AN!" Braden's use of capitalization and an exclamatory statement ~~also~~ ^{potentially} highlights the madness which Lady Audley is describing as capitalization is used rather sparingly in the novel. At the beginning of the novel Lady Audley's conversation with Sir Michael Lady Audley "with the same with "the strange passion which agitated her making her voice sound shrill and piercing E-I and pretentiously directed." Therefore despite Braden depicts Lady Audley as emotional and although so much to the stereotype of female emotion, that she seems

readers with the 'poison' - a feature of gender fiction. Not only that, but the engagement of an upper class woman disturbing the social or moral order (like Dick and Daisy who are originally rather stereotypical 'young ladies' who are children). Such an act of emotion would not 'pretend' action would likely shock Victorian readers even further as Southern fiction played on the sense and personal fear of the threat to social order. Similarly in *In Cold Blood* ^{is presented} ~~is~~ more advanced than Daisy as she had an 'uncharacteristic anxiety' regarding the emotional. Daisy herself. Similarly in the cartoon 'Mrs Huxtable Wept [...]' A few spectators glanced at her, and glared away.' This demonstrates the gender.

Overall women are presented as innocent (or not in the case of Lady Adley) dependent on men and excessively emotional, adhering to and challenging King Stereotypes.



This is an excellent example of a candidate answering on *In Cold Blood*, which some students struggled to shape to the question of the presentation of women. The argument is subtle, going beyond identifying female stereotypes to consider how women subvert societal expectations and comparing specific aspects of these stereotypes, such as the perception of women as emotional or the requirement for them to be innocent.

The analysis of Nancy Clutter's presentation is particularly strong for AO2.



Go beyond simply identifying and listing examples of a particular theme or idea; consider what deeper meanings your chosen examples help to create in the text overall.

Question 6

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present significant locations.'

This question was less frequently attempted, and some candidates were unable to explain why the locations they had chosen to discuss were significant. *Lady Audley's Secret* and *In Cold Blood* was the most popular pairing of texts, with many students considering Audley Court's isolation and atmosphere, comparing it to the isolation and ordinariness of the Clutter's farm. Most linked these to ideas about success and social standing and how the place symbolised something the criminals desired.

Some candidates explored with sophistication the presentation of the Clutter house, both before and after the murders, then used this as the centre of an essay exploring Capote's social commentary. Those writing about *The Murder Room* explored James' use of settings in following and adapting the conventional tropes of detective novels. One particularly sophisticated response noted the setting on the edge of London, allowing for the isolated old building whilst fitting credibly into James' contemporary Britain.

Contextual factors were again sometimes rather thin for the modern novels, while the Victorian novels were more thoroughly discussed in terms of historical attitudes and values, genre, and the contexts of gender and social class.

This answer on *Lady Audley's Secret* and *In Cold Blood* was awarded 16 marks in each grid, placing it at the top of Level 4.

It gained 32 marks in total.

In *Cold Blood* (CB) by Truman Capote, and in *Lady Audley's Secret* (LAS) by Mary Elizabeth Braddon, present locations are insignificant until something significant occurs there. Thus, locations are only a ~~tool~~ tool to set up a significant success or failure.

Both novels begin at a peaceful and welcoming location. In *LAS*, within the first page, the main setting is introduced as a 'convent, [where] the quiet nuns had walked hand in hand, whereby the use of monosyllables and the ~~no~~ religious connotations ~~with~~ of the ~~the~~ 'nuns', as Christ's 'Spouses, create a ~~no~~ calm and holy atmosphere. Similarly, *CB* ~~begin~~ 'stands on the high wheat plains', whereby monosyllables are used throughout, possibly ~~in~~ mimicking single steps towards both of these divine places. Still, the hyperbolic use of this quiet and monosyllabic words almost becomes deafening ~~this is~~ and distracting to the true nature of these ~~the~~ locations, so the locations create a deceptive foreshadowment of the future events. However, in *LAS*, the nuns are currently dead, as suggested by the use of past tense, hence the Audley court becomes a location of purgatory, whereby according to catholicism, the ghosts can only leave to heaven or hell. Therefore, these elements of death and ghosts introduce a gothic genre to the novel, possibly warning Lucy, or the

reader as a newcomer, so this location becomes significant in warning. ~~the~~ However, the location ~~also~~ may also be significant in illustrating the state in which Lucy arrives: a ghost, perhaps a sinner, thus her freedom of fate is already limited by location. In fact, the antagonists, Perry, Dick and Lucy ~~are introduced~~ are presented as demonic forces who cause turbulence in these holy grounds through the semantic field of sin they introduce with their 'hellish beauty', 'crime', 'suspicion', 'deceit', 'murders'. ~~Thus, it appears~~ ~~that~~ This turbulence disturbs the equilibrium of these locations, and as Vladimir Propp theorised, a change in equilibrium is required for any plot so that a new equilibrium can be reestablished at the end. ~~So~~ Therefore, the antagonists are reduced to literary tools for the authors to create their desired story and locations are stripped of their significance by also being reduced to a physical representation of an equilibrium. This is especially supported by the cyclical structure of both novels returning to the 'whisper of wind voices' in the wind-bent wheat' and closing with a biblical quotation: 'The righteous forsaken, ...', so the demonic force introduced by the antagonists, which is also a driving force for the novel, has been excoriated by the locations. Therefore, although reduced to literary devices,

locations become significant in reestablishing peace, but also reassuring that an equilibrium has been reached by returning to their original state once the invaders have been ^{physically} removed. Thus, both novels present the threat a location is capable of introducing to those who threaten its divinity. Perhaps, no human can threaten the power of mother nature, as it outlasts us and determines our fate.

Nevertheless, ~~in both novels it is people that~~ give locations significance in both novels, it is insiders who must ~~maintain~~ ^{provide} the significance of a location and protect it from outsiders. In ICB, ~~one of the main~~ ~~sources~~ sources of significance for Holcomb ~~is its~~ stems from the fact that ^{some} its residents have achieved the American Dream - a belief that one's hard work always led to success almost worthy of divine protection. Thus, by threatening the American Dream ~~the~~ Holcomb would lose its source of significance, as it also threatens ~~the~~ divinity, which surpasses a mere location. This threat invades the novel through the outsiders Dick and Perry, who ^{"murder"} ~~remove~~ the "Clutter family" and make insiders feel ~~"like it's~~ "it was like being told God doesn't exist". Similarly in LAS, Lucy ^{certainly} demonstrates an instant threat to the religious values of ~~the~~ Victorian England by threatening William

Palley's analogy of the deserted watch, and hence the Grand Design. This is seen in the metaphorical use of 'a clock-tower, with a stupid, bewildering clock... which jumped straight from one hour to the next'. Thus, both novels experience an attack on key beliefs of their societies. In LCB, this use of simile, ~~being~~ "like being told", certainly reflects the shock that Perry and Dick brought to this location, as it strips the core values from its inhabitants. In fact, it appears that God has lost its power to these outsiders, hence, making them more divine. ~~Sim~~ Correspondingly, in LAs, the use of imagery of the broken "clock-tower" certainly creates the illusion that Lady Audley^{Lucy} is responsible for this destruction, as she is the one to introduce an imperfection to the polite class and ~~an~~ Aristocracy. Hence, both outsiders steal the significance of the location they invade. However, none of these ~~an~~ characters can sustain this power/divinity, as they are eventually removed. Thus, they illustrate a futile attempt at mankind's ambition to have divine power, which only a location, which is immortal, can maintain. Therefore, although a location can lose significance, it only happens momentarily, which is very insignificant.

when contrasted to the life-span of that location.

Hence, a location becomes a metaphor for something greater than humanity, which is not affected by time. Thus, time controls and predetermines the significance of everything.

However, not all locations may be significant, and as presented in both novels, locations can gain significance through the events that occur there. This is ensured in LAS by the form of the ~~novel~~ novel as a Sensation Novel, which shifted ~~from~~ the location of dramatic events from ~~strange~~ ^{wild unknown} strange locations to very familiar locations, hence making them strange.

Thus, in LAS, the Audley Court gains significance through the crimes Helen commits, such as that of bigamy, which became much more common in the late 1850s due to the movement of location becoming more accessible. Hence, Helen becomes an everywoman ^{everyman} for those able to move locations and introduce a new threat to the new location. Still, she cannot escape from the original location as she is haunted by what she left behind; her son. ~~He is describe~~ she describes him as "a burden left upon [her] hands", whereby this use of metaphor certainly illustrates the ~~power~~ power of locations, as it is impossible to escape. Similarly, in LCB, Deney

attempts to escape the crime scene of Perry and Dick. ~~The~~ Dewey 'saw: the same childish feet, tilted, dangling', whereby the use of the past tense certainly ~~this~~ indicates that Dewey is attempting to distance himself from that location by moving away from the past to the present. However, that seems futile as the rule of three ~~still~~ ~~the~~ reinforces what he 'saw', and ~~traps~~ traps him, just like Helen is trapped by her past. Thus, the novels illustrate characters attempting to escape from locations, possibly giving them even more significance by trying to do so. Thus, the more resistance that is ~~it~~ applied, the more difficult it becomes to free oneself. Thus, locations become cages for those that ~~who~~ want to escape them and gain significance through defiance. Perhaps, we can never escape from what truly haunts us, as the only way to defeat it is by accepting it, so we remain stuck in a paradox.

In conclusion, locations become a metaphor for the struggles of maintaining tranquility when it is against our nature to do so. ~~Perhaps, the~~ Additionally, it appears that location cannot have significance

~~is~~ without humans ~~at~~ as it is them
who provide it, and they are required
for it to be recognised. Thus, it is us
who trap ourselves in ~~a~~ the significance of
location.



This is a good example of a candidate who does not address all of the assessment objectives equally. It is very strong in AO2 and AO4 (analysis of the writer's craft and connections between texts), but less so for AO1 and AO3 (quality of argument and consideration of contextual factors).

The introduction of this essay is a little general and doesn't give an indication of the overall argument the candidate is putting forward. However, as the essay develops, the strength of the connections made between the texts, particularly when comparing the writer's craft lift the essay to the top of Level 4. There is an evaluative approach taken when exploring the potential meanings of quotations.

Religious and genre contexts are perceptively explored at the start of the essay, although towards the end there is a less sharp focus on the question.



Try to make sure you address all 4 of the assessment objectives fairly equally; concentrating on one at the expense of another will reduce your overall mark.

As sensation novels, an emerging genre of Victorian fiction popularised by Braddon in the 1860s, following Newgate and Gothic novels, the narratives of both texts take place predominantly in the bucolic country home. Crimes are both committed and solved within the locus of the family, reflecting Henry James' description of sensation fiction as 'the mysteries that are at our own doors', meaning that the locations of both novels would have been familiar to contemporaries. Indeed, sensation novels served as a means through which contemporary readers were able to explore the fears and anxieties that pervaded their lives.

Significant locations are employed at the beginning of both novels to create mystery, however,

while 'Lady Audley's secret' (hereafter LAD) begins with a description of Audley court, the family home, to establish the novel as a family drama, 'The Moonstone' (hereafter MOT) opens ~~with~~ in India: Collins expands the narrative, shifting between national to familial relationships. Audley court somewhat serves as a mute confession from the very beginning of the novel: it embodied duality in the same way that Lady Audley is revealed to encompass the binary personas of victim and villain, lower-class woman and 'Lady'. The house comprised of a conflation of emblems of the past; its windows are both 'rich stained glass' and 'frail lattices'. In the same way, Lady Audley's persona consists of a ~~mere~~ mélange of her previous identities: ~~she~~ ~~signify~~ her bonnet-box and diary, objects that travel, mark her as a woman who has circulated society and ultimately ascended the social hierarchy of Victorian society. This concept draws on Darwin's 'origin of the species' 1859, which introduced to Victorian readership the idea that life, and indeed a person's identity, could be ~~traced~~ traced backwards, exploring the impact of the past upon the present. This emerging notion pervades MOT's narrative in a similar manner: the Moonstone diamond and the derestoration it

wrears upon ~~the~~ familial order served as an examination of the consequences of the British's actions in India. It is particularly significant that Audley Court's duality is manifested in its windows; surfaces that reflect and create images. Windows form a visual bridge between the inside and outside, in the same way that the shivering sands in ~~the~~ Mat form a gateway between what is visible and what is concealed, and therefore allude to Lady Audley's multiple, hidden identities, that exist on a plane beyond that which is visible to the other characters at the beginning of the book. Audley Court, in addition, is 'irregular', this adjective alludes to Lady Audley's ^{latent} 'madness', which she later produces in an attempt to exonerate herself from her crimes. The idea of a facade, a hidden reality beneath the surface, creates mystery and tension from the beginning of the novel.

The opening of Mat, by contrast, is taken from a family document detailing the storming of Seringapatam. The narrative opens with 'I address these lines - written in India', introducing the notion of a witness testimony from the beginning, which characterises the narrative mode of the novel. Written from the perspective of 11 different narrators, Bentham found human evidence, or witnesses, to be

unreliable, and declared that object evidence ~~was~~ alone was sufficient to reveal the truth. ~~However~~ This verdict was founded on the idea that human evidence was both subjective and vulnerable to manipulation; indeed, in *LA*, Lady Audley bribes Phoebe to keep her secret, stating 'you shall never be in want of a firm friend or a twenty-pound note'. The evidence provided to us at the beginning of *MA*, in the significant location of India, however, is, in fact, evidence of the very variety that Bentham dismissed. The narrator posits 'John Herncastle, with a torch in one hand, and a dagger dripping with blood in the other,' subversively portraying a British man as a murderer and the original thief of the Moonstone diamond. This allegation would have been shocking to contemporaries: the Victorian era was characterised by the spirit of British superiority, and national pride was strong. Moreover, this opening suggests the British to be the ~~victims~~ oppressors in the Indian Mutiny of 1857, while Indians were typically demonised as the villains. Indeed, Dickens, *Caricature* editor and publisher, is reported to have praised reports of 'wretched Hindoos being blown from an English gun'. As this portrayal is founded on subjective witness evidence, therefore, and cannot be regarded

as infallible, the ~~new~~ victim/villain dichotomy in regards to the British remains ambiguous. Perhaps this represents an attempt, on Collins' part, to mitigate the subversive nature of his message: in order to render the novel acceptable for the Victorian public, he employed the significant location of India to introduce mystery surrounding the implication of the British via the binaries of subjectivity and objectivity.

Braddon, too, in *LAD*, engaged with the pivotal contextual moment of the Indian Mutiny via the significant location of the well in Audley Court. The 'stagnant well' recalls the well in Cawnpore, India, down which Indian soldiers threw British women and children. The alternate views of the Indians as either oppressors or the oppressed can similarly be applied to Lady Audley: she is either a clever ~~and~~ woman who capitalises on her beauty in order to manipulate men to ultimately achieve wealth, or, according to a 21st century feminist reading, an oppressed woman subjugated under the patriarchal hierarchy of Victorian society who marries to ensure the financial security which she lacks, rendering her vulnerable. In *LAD*, therefore, there is no one version of the 'truth', in the same way that the witnesses in *Mot* reflect and refract

the truth in a manner similar to how the multi-faceted moonstone diamond reflects and refracts the light: the diamond becomes a symbol of the inconstancy of the truth, a notion that is introduced in LA through the significant location of the well.

Imperialism is explored again in MT through the significant location of Rachel's boudoir: while the boudoir in LA, too, serves as a significant location, it does not reveal wider themes regarding the actions of British soldiers in the mutiny, but rather serves to expose Lady Audley's multiple identities to Robert. Rachel, in MT, places the Indian diamond in the Indian cabinet, compartmentalising ^{ing} the same 'other' in the same way that the Indian sections of narrative are pushed to the outer edges of the novel, book ending the British narrative, as if the foreign cannot be allowed to infringe upon the privacy of the English family. The diamond is then stolen by Franklin, a British man, under the authority of Godfrey: another British man. In MT, criminals are British. Although the Brahmins are posited as criminals from the beginning, suspected due to their 'otherness' and dehumanised via animistic imagery in 'tigerish quickness' and 'snarey', they are ultimately innocent of the crime. Collins, here, suggests

the Indians to be ~~innocent~~ victims of the crime of appropriation, however he figured this accusation in terms of the theft of the diamond to allow his potentially tendentious message to remain implicit. The theft of the diamond, however, is figured simultaneously as a sexual act: stolen on Rachel's 18th birthday, the loss of the diamond reflects the loss of Rachel's virginity. Indeed, Rachel maintains no sexual influence throughout the novel, until Rosanna's utter reveals Franklin's role as the thief, and the oedipal moment of self-discovery, marked by the exclamation 'I have discovered myself as the thief!' in which the repetition of personal pronouns indicates Franklin's shift in identity from amateur detective to villain. A woman who withheld sexually was idealised by contemporaries: her virginity was regarded as her 'jewel'. Therefore, the theft of the diamond from the significant location of the diamond takes on a sexual meaning to mark the point at which Rachel's character loses significance - she is reduced, ultimately, to the wife of Franklin: the reward for his masculine journey of self-discovery.

Lady Audley's boudoir, also a significant location, is similarly sexually charged. Boundaries were privileged by Victorians and privacy was treasured -

indeed, Audley Court is obscured by 'high hedges', and the house in Mot is located 'high up on the Yorkshire coast'. Yet Robert and George breach them in their voyeuristic penetration into Lady Audley's boudoir via a 'secret passage'. Within the boudoir lies Lady Audley's portrait, which epigrammatically frames her as the criminal. The 'ripe scarlet of the pouting lips' and 'crimson dress' within the portrait portray Lady Audley as a 'femme fatale': red is associated with warning, and the portrait, therefore, indicates her hidden, dangerous nature to Robert and George. Victorian portraits commonly fetishised women for the male gaze: indeed, pre-Raphaelite art featured women in a similar manner to the portrait in *Two Ladies*. In particular, Rossetti's contemporaneous 'Pandora', depicts a woman and features red, in an image reminiscent of the scene which precedes the chapter titled: 'The red light in the sky'. 'Lady Audley [...] a red haze lit up the skies behind her'. In her portrait, she is both passive and objectified by men and has dangerous agency: a dichotomy embodied by her character, as she capitalises on her beauty and the admiration of men to commit crimes. The final significant location of the novel, Villebrumese, reinforces this idea: she

is surrounded, not by mirrors, but by 'wretched
mooreries of burnished tin', as she no longer
is able to capitalise on her beauty, shut away in
a mental institution.

Overall, the significant locations of *MAT* are
split between India and Britain, while *CAU*
focuses on the family. We read *MAT* through
the lens of imperialism, rather than
gender ^{is the case} in *LAD*.



This essay has a thorough grounding in the context of the genre of sensation fiction and uses this as a starting point for a wide ranging discussion of locations and their specific significances. A key strength of the essay is its ability to connect examples with their wider meanings. At all times there is perceptive understanding of why writers have used particular locations and how these have been developed to enhance key ideas and themes within the novels. The essay also effectively balances its overview of the novels with close, detailed analysis of specific examples.



In your analysis of quotations, consider why your writer has chosen to use a particular technique; how does it help them to convey ideas and create meanings?

Question 7

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present warnings about the future.'

This was the most popular question on the paper and elicited some exceptional responses. Candidates responded confidently to warnings about the future, with many drawing from contemporary discussions concerning environmental breakdown and gender discrimination. At the top end, candidates integrated contextual knowledge with a sophisticated analysis of the writer's craft. Even rather descriptive answers demonstrated an awareness of the importance of historical precedent in relation to *The Handmaid's Tale*, with some pointing to topical comparisons such as the Alabama anti-abortion bill and contemporary feminist discourse. Most answers focused on warnings about science without constraints, warnings about the role of religion and ethics or the danger of the suppression of women. A number of candidates explored the relevance of the writers' warnings to the modern world; this often led to interesting discussions, and some candidates related these ideas very tightly to details in the text, however some shifted a little too far from the novels at these points, drawing relatively general comparative links between the two historical periods.

Many candidates were able to evaluate the presentation of warnings about the future across their texts. Some insightful discussion was seen about the danger of hubris and the moral challenges created by scientific advancement in *Never Let Me Go* and perceptive links made, particularly between *Never Let Me Go* and *Frankenstein* in relation to loss of humanity for creators and creations. Successful pairings were also seen using *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Frankenstein*, with many candidates exploring and comparing the threat of organised religion and the threat of science to existing religious and moral codes.

The best answers were explicit about exactly what the writers were warning about, and could identify the recipient of these warnings as contemporary readers and future societies, while less successful answers tended to focus on warnings but not be specific about what the warning actually was. They also tended to consider warnings to characters within the narrative and therefore to focus entirely on plot rather than the wider concerns explored in the novels overall. This sometimes led to them treating the novels and characters as if they were real, and a corresponding lack of consideration of the ways in which writers had constructed their warnings.

Historical context was sometimes used inaccurately, with candidates not being sure in what era *Frankenstein* was written and referring to possible social and literary influences on Mary Shelley that did not happen until well after the novel was published, or misunderstanding the significance of Galvani's experiments (with a number claiming that he had managed to 'bring frogs back to life', or indeed that Aldini had 'reanimated criminal corpses'). However most candidates wrote insightfully about the contemporary fears of the novels and were able to meaningfully discuss Shelley's reflection on the scientific discoveries of the Enlightenment, Atwood's integration of right wing politics in the 1980s, Ishiguro's exploration of the ethics of cloning and H.G. Wells' critique of British Imperialism.

Higher scoring answers tended to have a more developed focus on AO2, with exploration of the methods writers used to present their warnings. In weaker answers, this assessment objective was sometimes overlooked and essays lacked detailed analysis of textual details, taking a more narrative or historical approach.

Both Mary Shelley in Frankenstein and Margaret Atwood in The Handmaid's Tale present bleak tales of the explorations of gender. Whilst Shelley, reacting to the Romantic ideal of the ambitious male, presents a warning of ignorant female nurture, Atwood rejects Shelley's warning, and presents a bleak tale of the dangers of restricting women into their stereotypically domestic spheres.

In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley warns us of the dangers of male ambition and advocates a gentler way of living. Victor Frankenstein is the archetypal Romantic individual; he possesses a Promethean ambition to 'pour a torrent of light into our dark world'. Prometheus, in Greek mythology, had incurred divine wrath after creating ^{life} ~~light~~ out of clay ~~and~~, animating it with the light of the sun he had stolen from the gods. ~~As punishment~~ Prometheus was idealised as the true spirit of Romanticism, immortalised by Percy Shelley as the 'man with the most perfect man, in intellectual ambition and nature'. Victor possesses Prometheus' unwavering ambition; he is characterised as having a 'fernest longing to penetrate the secrets of nature. This boiling ('fernest' from the Latin *fernestem* meaning to boil) passion ~~is such that~~ leads him to neglect all domestic duties, preferring instead to spend 'days and nights in vaults and charnel houses' to the point where he lost all 'soul and sensation except this one pursuit'. Quite unlike her husband's admiration for the Promethean figure, Mary Shelley associates Victor's ambition as dangerous: his desire to pour 'light' on the world is contrasted by the darkness of his pursuits. The physical darkness evoked by the 'nights' in

vaults and the metaphysical darkness symbolic darkness of the 'chapel house', associated as a building of skeletal remains, associated with death and destruction leave Victor in a similar state ~~state~~ to that of Prometheus, punished eternally by Zeus for interfering with the divine realm. Victor too has abandoned his concerns for God; his ~~own~~ boundless ambition to create life has resulted in a 'loss of his soul'. Shelley contrasts Victor's ambition, when contrasted with Elizabeth's love and selflessness, serves as a warning of the dangers of ~~marginalising women~~ ignoring the cruciality of female nurture on social order. Whilst Victor is continually associated with darkness, Elizabeth is always placed in the light: with 'celestial eyes' and a 'saintly soul', she represents the light and goodness of the divine. Contrasting Victor's dangerous neglect of the divine, Elizabeth (literally meaning 'gift from God') is idealised as the 'living spirit of love'. Her godly goodness is never tainted with a lustful curiosity; when Victor 'studied the wild fancies of [philosophers] with delight' and 'disclosed [his] studies to Elizabeth', she 'did not interest herself on the subject, and Victor was left to 'pursue them on [his]

own: Elizabeth Rather, Elizabeth 'continually endeavours to contribute to the happiness of others, entirely forgetful of her own'. Indeed, Elizabeth represents the archetypal self-sacrificing woman (something represented in Coventry Patmore's 1954 poem 'Angel in the House' in which he wrote 'man must be pleased; but him to please is woman's pleasure... dearly devoted to his arms his his arms; she loves with love that cannot tire!')

Mary Shelley's mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, had rebelled against the ^{apparently socially-constructed} gender stereotype of the nurturing female and wished that 'the distinction of sex be confounded in society'. Mary Shelley consciously swerved from her mother's feminism and wrote in a letter: 'my best belief - whether there be sex in souls or not - is that our [female] material mechanism makes us quite different creatures - better though weaker but wanting in the higher grades of the intellect'. Elizabeth's description as a 'garden rose among brambles' presents Shelley's feminism: women are like delicate rose flowers, persisting above the harsh, sharp penetrating brambles of male ambition.

Through the contrast between the character of Victor and Elizabeth, it is clear that she rejects her husband's and her mother's views,

presenting us with a bleak warning of the dangers of male ambition, and the dangers of dismissing the importance of female love and nurture.

Atwood, more confident in her views than Shelley, battles with ~~the~~ the feminine ideal presented in Frankenstein. By aligning herself more with Wollstonecraft, who argued that the 'desire to be always a woman is the very consciousness that degrades the sex' presents the warning of restricting women into their feminine stereotypes, which opposes Shelley's view//like Shelley had advocated an embrace of gender differences, the Ecriture feminine critical movement of the late 20th century suggested that women were in dire need of a new mode of expression; literacy, they argued, was intrinsically phallogocentric, and ~~and orality was better suited~~ women should abandon it completely. Orality, they argued, was much better suited for the female mind. Orality, ^{cultures} because historical words are quickly and forever forgotten, tend towards a state of balance; homeostasis. Literate cultures, able to 'turn back the pages' are able to review what's passed, and make strides in social progress.



This answer on Question 7 on *Frankenstein* and *The Handmaid's Tale* was placed at the high end of Level 5.

It was given 18 marks for AO1 and 2 and 19 for AO3 and 4.

A total of 37 out of 40.

This essay focuses on the warnings presented about gender, using this as a starting point to consider several different lines of argument.

It is particularly strong when analysing the writer's craft, making insightful and evaluative comments on the meanings of words and phrases.

Unlike many responses to this question, the candidate differentiates between Mary Shelley's views (of Romanticism, Prometheus etc.) and those of her husband – these were often conflated in other answers. The analysis of the orality of *The Handmaid's Tale* and the *écriture* feminine is particularly adept. While not everyone will agree with the conclusions reached about the novels, the argument is made convincingly and shows the candidate's original critical voice emerging.



It's ok to give your own interpretations of the novels, as long as you put forward your ideas in an academic way and can support them with evidence from the texts.

Question 8

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts make use of the natural world.'

A wide range of approaches to the question were seen, many of which were very interesting and original, exploring aspects of the natural world insightfully. Whilst some candidates chose to comment on the presentation and description of natural settings and the use of techniques such as pathetic fallacy to foreshadow future events, other students chose to consider mankind's manipulation of natural processes, most notably reproduction in *Frankenstein* and *The Handmaid's Tale*. Some candidates turned this question into an essay on unnatural methods of reproduction, without making sufficient reference to the presentation of the natural world. On occasion, it seemed that candidates were re-using previous essays on the authors' use of a range of locations (the 2018 question), without necessarily ensuring that the examples chosen represented the natural world.

In the two modern texts especially, there was a tendency for some candidates to focus on the absence of the natural world or, more successfully, on ways in which the natural order was subverted within the texts. While overall this question was well answered, a significant minority of candidates struggled to define the natural world clearly, taking it to include any and all aspect of human society and human nature. This was a particular issue for candidates who answered on *The Handmaid's Tale*, whose exemplification often had no real connection at all to the natural world. Better answers were able to examine Atwood's use of natural imagery, such as the use of natural settings in Offred's flashbacks in contrast to the man-made structures which dominate her present, or Serena Joy's garden as a symbol of human attempts to curtail and restrict the natural world, including the fertility and reproductive rights of the handmaids. Others chose to focus on the environmental aspects of the novel and mankind's negative impact on the natural world with reference to the nuclear disaster implied in the novel and its impact on human society.

Similarly, some of those writing on *Never Let Me Go* struggled to exemplify the natural world beyond the woods outside Hailsham, thus not fully demonstrating their knowledge of the whole novel. Better responses considered the descriptions of vast empty landscapes, the symbolism of water and coastal settings, and the ways in which the clones are placed outside the natural order through their isolation and institutionalisation, and are unable to enter the natural world despite always standing on its threshold.

The pre-1900 novels tended to be explored more thoroughly in terms of their contexts, and those writing on *Frankenstein* in particular often made more use of contextual factors in their essays, with many discussing Romanticism, the sublime and the philosophical ideas of Rousseau and Locke in relation to mankind's place within the natural world and the conflict between nature and society. Those writing on *The War of the Worlds* were able to confidently discuss Darwin's theory of evolution and the novel as a criticism of imperialism, commenting on Wells' use of the animal kingdom and the natural world as metaphors for the vulnerability, complacency and insignificance of humanity. A number of successful responses compared the use of weather and day and night time settings, along with the symbolism of the sun and moon which often led to excellent analysis of the writers' methods and interesting comparisons of symbolic meanings.

In both Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' and Margaret Atwood's 'The Handmaid's Tale' the natural world is presented as a deeply contradictory force, capable of both destruction and restoration. Shelley's acute awareness of cultural change taking place in the early 1800s when she wrote the novel is perhaps her motive for presenting the natural world in this way, her characters suffering at the hands of nature as a result of their own or others' endeavours. Atwood similarly makes use of the science vs religion debate which reached its height during the activism-driven 1980s, thereby presenting a warning to readers against the ^{pursuit} ~~pursuit~~ of a passive existence within society to the detriment of its citizens as nature is manipulated by those in power.

Both ~~the~~ writers ~~present~~ make use of the natural world by presenting its positive attributes and how these cause restoration, in turn demonstrating how the loss of these attributes would be detrimental.

In Frankenstein, this may be viewed most clearly in the ambitious progression and inspiration nature causes, as well as its restorative abilities. The novel begins in Epistolary Form, Shelley choosing to introduce initially the character of Walton, a man whose own ambitions desires leads him to possessing the wish to overcome the boundaries of nature, the landscapes he encounters only spurring his quest for knowledge further onward. Indeed, at the very beginning of his first letter Walton feels a "cold northern breeze" that fills him "with delight". The juxtaposition present here ~~may also be viewed in his later communications~~ occurs throughout his first letter "I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the

seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight". Shelley utilises this juxtaposition of ominous "desolation" and the human joy of "delight" to perhaps foreshadow later ~~shortcomings~~ failures Walton's journey encounters as a result of nature's restrictions, yet in putting forth the narrative of a naive, ambitious man blinded by the deceptive beauty of nature, Shelley is able to comment on the shifting values of the Enlightenment period. Indeed, this period ~~put forth~~ valued the quest for scientific advancements and held these in higher regard than respect for nature, and Shelley's initial descriptions are a warning against this dismissal. Later in the text, Victor's mental downfall as a result of his scientific endeavours are seemingly cured only by nature's beauty: "we passed a fortnight in these perambulations: my health and spirits had long since been restored", and the Romantic character of Clerval who initiates this natural convalescence is utilised by Shelley as a foil for Victor's arrogance to natural power and his death symbolic of Shelley's belief that societal scientific pursuits favoured over nature's beauty are to the detriment of others.

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, the positive attributes

of nature are presented by Atwood as a source of comfort for those trapped in a society that devalues the natural world in favour of the religious. Indeed, Offred's desperation to cling onto the past is seen most prevalently in the 'Night' sections of the novel, where she is able to be alone with her thoughts. Her flashbacks to her mother's activism ~~shows~~ ^{show} ~~rigid~~ ^{rigid} and child-like imagery of nature that the current Offred describes as "discomolate": "no leaves on the trees, two ducks in the pond". Atwood's presentation of Offred physically counting the natural world's attributes contributes to the ideology of escapism as a source of comfort however, like Shelley, this jarring and perhaps contradictory description of the natural world as the opposite of comforting seems a stark reminder of how the past can be overcome. Indeed, ~~Atwood's~~ ~~description~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~"happy,~~ ~~ecstatic"~~ ~~onlookers~~ ~~as~~ ~~the~~ ~~result~~ ~~of~~ ~~fire~~ ~~is~~ ~~directly~~ ~~contradictory~~ - fire is something both natural and man-made that can cause destruction, however the protestors valued this destruction, a comment by Atwood on the sense of hope the natural world can also possess. This is ~~seen~~ ~~again~~ ~~in~~ ~~Offred's~~ ~~description~~ ~~of~~ ~~Luke~~ ~~"lying~~ ~~face~~ ~~down~~ ~~in~~ ~~a~~ ~~thicket"~~

"of ground hemlock perhaps, although its too early for the red berries". Again, Offred's evaluative stance surrounding the death of Luke can be seen as a source of hope, Atwood's juxtaposition of death and the growth that occurs as a result a reminder that nature's restorative power will prevail.

~~Both writers~~ Both writers also present ^{the} natural ^{world} as dangerous, especially when manipulated by the pursuits of humanity.

In Frankenstein, ~~Victor~~ both Victor and the monster's isolation can be viewed as a result of the natural world's power. Victor's over-ambitious pursuits, unlike Walton's, lead him to become in direct conflict with nature, bent on harnessing its power for his own progression. His initial decision to do this is seen in Shelley's frightening description of the powerful storm near Belrive "the thunder burst at once with frightful loudness". This violent and descriptive imagery is further personified by Victor, who watched "its progress with curiosity and delight." Again, Shelley's use of the emotion of "delight," this time coupled with the uneasiness evoked by "curiosity", appear to set up Victor's harnessing of the natural world as doomed to fail. Indeed, when

Victor finally ends up pursuing the creature across the Arctic, symbolically "drifting on a scattered piece of ice, that was continuously lessening". Shelley presents his isolation as a source of ultimate danger. The monster's forced escape to the woods where his only comfort is the moon: "gentle light: and the "pleasure" of the discovery of fire similarly to Atwood's description presents the monster in direct comparison to Victor as a tabula rasa who has not yet been spoiled by the evils of humanity.

In the Hutteria's Tale, Atwood's continued usage of the symbolism of flowers is an example of her views on the detrimental power of nature. Indeed, Coilead's very formation was as a result of a nuclear war, something nature concurrently enabled and was disabled by. In the 1950s at the time Atwood was writing, nuclear tensions were high as a result ~~of~~ of such events as the Three-Mile Island incident, and the intense fear of a nuclear disaster dominated the public's view on the importance of preserving nature. After Coilead's formation, however, nature becomes almost a mockery of its harshly-controlled citizens, Serena Joy's angered "snipping" at the Seed

poets in her fertile garden an ironic allusion to how nature's perpetual ability to return is viewed as a detriment in Gilead, whose women are almost always unable to do the same. Offred's wish to steal a flower from her Commander's house follows this: "a dried flower" - "it would make me feel that I have power". Here, Atwood utilizes Offred's intense desire to own something natural to present the ones bearing power of nature upon those who, alive to it, have been manipulated by society.

To conclude, both authors present the natural world as a powerful force, with the capability to do both good through restoration and evil through destruction. The power of nature's return in *The Handmaid's Tale* offers hope, whilst at the same time making a mockery of those trapped within a controlled society. Shelley's restorative nature is also the spark that set alight the ambitions of those seeking enlightenment-era values, demonstrating fully nature's ability to cause destruction and downfall.



This essay on Question 8 using *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Frankenstein* was awarded 19 marks in each of the assessment grids.

A total of 38 out of 40.

This candidate puts forward a very interesting opening argument about the ways in which Atwood and Shelley use the natural world to explore contemporary debates – the point about Atwood's warning about a passive existence while nature is manipulated and damaged is particularly thought-provoking.

By examining different qualities of the natural world (its restorative qualities, as a source of inspiration, humanity's desire to transcend its boundaries, fostering a sense of hope and as a dangerous and destructive force), the essay covers a huge amount of ideas and is able to give a thorough and wide ranging answer to the question. This is a good example of how *The Handmaid's Tale*, a text which some candidates struggled to connect to the natural world, could be effectively used for this question. The exemplification and discussion of the writer's craft in this text is also particularly good.



Having several different lines of argument can be a good way to develop your ideas and ensures that your essay is wide ranging and well structured. It's important to plan these in advance.

Question 9

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present women.'

This question was very well answered, and candidates seemed to have enjoyed exploring the feminist interpretations of their novels and of gothic conventions. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula* was a very popular combination of texts.

Weaker responses tended to describe the women within the novels they had studied. However, most were able to put forward a thoughtful argument about the position of women in society, female sexuality and the conventions of gothic literature. This naturally led to discussions of contextual factors which were often seamlessly integrated into the essay. On occasion, there was a failure to consider the distinctive contextual factors relevant to each text; some assumed that the historical and social context applied equally to both novels without considering the very different backgrounds, intentions and concerns of Stoker and Wilde. Those writing on *The Little Stranger* and *Beloved* sometimes struggled to write cohesive comparative arguments, and there was little consideration of the historical settings, and sometimes confusion between the time of writing and the time the novels were set in. Some very good responses were seen comparing the presentation of strong women that subvert patriarchal expectations such as Sethe, Caroline and to some extent Mina. For those candidates who used *Beloved*, there was often fruitful discussion of the impact of slavery on women, but only occasionally a broader understanding of the female empowerment which is a key idea in the novel.

The best essays considered a range of women in each novel; some writing about *The Picture of Dorian Gray* wrote only about Sybil Vane and therefore struggled to develop their arguments further. Some very perceptive responses were seen which wrote about Wilde's use of minor women in the novel such as Lord Henry's wife and Sybil's mother, or male characters' comments about women and what these revealed about the broader themes of the novel. AO2 analysis was often very well developed, for example comparing the blood stains on the white clothing in *Dracula* and the descriptions of the vampire women with the innocent flower imagery associated with Sybil.

Those candidates who considered the subtle nuances of meaning in the 19th century novels often scored highly. For example, many candidates writing on *Dracula* considered Lucy's playful question as to why women cannot marry three men as representing 19th century concerns about the New Woman and female promiscuity, while Mina was portrayed as a more 'traditional' model of perfect domestic femininity. Better answers addressed the subtlety with which Mina, as the true representation of the New Woman, combines modernity and convention; she works, takes a leading role in the search for Dracula, is intelligent, and uses modern technology, but does so in order to help the men and maintains her modesty and religious faith, thus does not threaten the social order in the same way as Lucy. Lucy was sometimes explored as another facet of the corrupt aristocracy, like Dracula himself. Some successful essays incorporated knowledge and understanding of the duality within 19th century London (some referring to Stoker's biographical context – with a sexual disease caught from prostitutes), thoughtfully analysing the transformation of the stereotypical literary heroine into the 'other'.

Stoker presents women in a lower position of power and authority than the men in his novel, which leads to the dominance ~~of men~~ and the ill-treatment of the women by the men. On the other hand, Morrison places women in a powerful position as they are dominant, ~~not~~ influential and ~~independent~~ ^{independent}. However, overall, it can be argued that in both ~~to~~ novels women suffer as a result of men being more powerful in the society. ~~Dracula~~ Dracula was published in 1897, ~~an~~ ~~imperialist~~ where Britain were at the height of patriarchy and imperialism, therefore resulting in men ~~overpowering~~ overpowering women in the society. On the other hand, Morrison seemed to depict women in a more influential role due ~~to~~ to the ~~trauma~~ traumas of slavery.

In Dracula women are punished by the men as a result of sexual liberty and transgressive attitude. This is demonstrated by the character of Lucy after ^{she} is bitten by Dracula. Lucy is called "sweet" and "pure" before her incident with Dracula, however she becomes "vulnerable" and an ill looking "creature". This demonstrates the extent of the sexual oppression by the patriarchal men of the society as women are only "pure" when they obey the societal roles and values which clearly restrict their liberty. Furthermore, towards the end of the book Lucy is killed with a "stake through the throat" and the "heart" by a group of men. Dr. Seward describes this as the "stake going deeper and deeper." ~~the stake~~ ~~there is a~~ stake uses phallic imagery to show the "cleansing of Lucy's soul". This scene almost reflects a rape scene where multiple men are ~~penetrating~~ penetrating a woman ~~forcibly~~ by force. ~~This scene~~ ~~The crucifixion~~ ~~The group of~~ Lucy is punished by the men in order for her soul to be "cleaned". From a feminist perspective it can be argued the men ~~did this out to~~ ~~put~~ put her back in the ~~top~~ her social hierarchy as she had transgressed socially. During the 19th century, women were ~~in a~~ were expected to be obedient to the men in their families such as fathers, husbands and this was due to ~~the~~ how society functioned as a whole ~~and~~ and the lack of legal equality and education. Therefore, overall women in Dracula are oppressed by the men due to their

Sexual transgression.

On the other hand, *Beloved* depicts women as more powerful and influential as the men in the society. This can clearly be illustrated through the character of Baby Suggs and the clearing. During a motivational speech in front of women, men, children, Baby Suggs teaches the black community to "love their flesh" because "they don't". She tells all people to "love your hands my people as they don't love your skin". ~~Baby Suggs~~ Morrison's use of emotive language highlights Baby Suggs' attempt to heal and recover the pains that she does went through. Her emotional speech leaves "women crying" and "children dancing". Therefore, it can be said that Baby Suggs is a key influential and powerful character in the novel as she is able to reach a big audience and affect people's lives. Moreover, the power of women in *Beloved* is also illustrated through the independence of Sethe. She is a single mother that works and is in no need of another man in her life. On the contrary, in *Dracula* the women are powerless and heavily dependent on the men. ~~In~~ In *Dracula* the men are the "heroes" that "save" both Mina and Lucy's lives from the evil. The sharp contrast between the two novels are as a result of the time periods in which the books are published. Although, *Beloved* is set

In the 19th century, Morrison wanted to revolt the societal roles ~~at the~~ and depict the women as more powerful. This is because she wanted to lay out the harsh reality of slavery where both women and men were oppressed, tortured by the white slave owners in America.

However, overall it can be argued that in both texts women are still abused physically and emotionally by the men. In *Dracula* Lucy is "stabbed through the heart" due to her sexual transgressive act. Mina is controlled and "bitten by Dracula, a male antagonist, similarly, the women in *Beloved* such as Sethe are abused by the men. This can be highlighted in the scene where the men take "~~her~~ my (Beloved's) milk". This shocking scene where Beloved's breast milk is being taken by the men demonstrates the harsh realities of slavery and thus the ~~abuse~~ abuse of women. Furthermore, Beloved is forced to have sex with a man ~~in~~ in order to write ~~Beloved's~~ her ~~dead~~ daughter's name in the grave ~~stone~~ stone. As "she rutts among the stones", "maybe 15 more ~~seconds~~ seconds and I could get a sentence". The lack of emotion in this cruel situation presents the raw ~~ill~~ treatment of the slaves, where ~~sex in~~ even sex ~~for~~ for money was normalised for her. Therefore, it can be argued that ~~both~~ in both texts ~~the~~ ~~women~~ the

women ~~are~~ suffer as a result of men. However, Morrison depicts women in this manner to remind the readers of effects and harshness of slavery, whereas Stokers oppression of the women in his novel are unintentional. ~~as he is not~~ This is because Stokers main focus is on the supernatural, whilst Morrison focuses more on the emotional and physical effects of slavery.

To conclude, Morrison offers a range of different perspective on women. From women being raped, tortured and abused to also women who are more powerful and independent than the men in the novel. Whilst Dracula only places women in a position of less power where they are dependent on the men to be saved. Overall, both novels offer different perspectives on women due to their aims as a writer and also the normalities of society and culture.



This essay on Question 9 compared *Dracula* and *Beloved*. It was placed on the border between Levels 4 and 5, gaining 17 marks for AO1 and 2, and 16 for AO3 and 4.

A total of 33 out of 40.

This essay has a fairly straightforward opening argument about women lacking power, but is elevated to the Level 4/5 border because of its close textual reference and analysis and the focused comparisons drawn between the texts. There are plentiful short, integrated quotations used to illustrate and develop points.



Quotations do not have to be very lengthy; using shorter quotations can help you to focus on analysing specific features of the writer's craft.

Question 10

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present menace.'

Candidates offered some creative responses on the theme of 'menace.' The best answers provided an academic analysis of gothic conventions, alongside the depiction of societal 'menaces' such as the fear of the 'other' in *Dracula* or the spectral nature of trauma in *Beloved*. This resulted in a select number of impressive essays. There were some excellent responses to this question that evaluated not only the ways in which the supernatural elements of the novels created menace, but also how this could be achieved using characters, settings and relationships.

Some candidates focused on fear or a sense of threat (previous exam question topics), or on evil characters rather than menace, and while there was some overlap, the best answers were able to demonstrate a clear understanding of what menace was and how it was created by the authors. There was much useful discussion of gothic, mystery and horror as genres which helped candidates to integrate contextual factors into their responses. Many candidates considered characters who were central to the menace within the novels, such as Dracula or Dorian Gray and discussed them as menaces towards women and wider society. Some sophisticated responses made connections between the roles of these characters as outsiders, with reference to the social and political contexts in which the texts were written. It often benefitted answers to clearly explore what they understood by menace in the introduction to the essay. This helped candidates to focus clearly on the terms of the question before developing more complex arguments.

Context was, on the whole, very well dealt with, with successful essays incorporating factors such as: the 19th century fear of reverse colonisation in *Dracula*; the understanding of London's 'hidden' corruption in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; the post-war class shifts in *The Little Stranger* (although this last was rarely related to Waters' early 21st century context of production), and the latent anger of former slaves – and, by implication, 1980s African-Americans – in *Beloved*.

Discussions about physiognomy in the two Victorian novels were often good and the menace of Dracula's appearance was well-linked to Victorian fears about otherness and xenophobia as well as invasion from the East.

In *Beloved*, the menace of supernatural forces was well explored as well as the menace of the oppressive societal situation of slaves and women.

Within both Victorian-era novels, Stoker and Wilde convey general attitudes of menace in 'Dracula' and 'The Picture of Dorian Gray'. Capitalising off 'Fin de Siècle' anxieties, so late 19th Century society felt threatened by 'the other', ~~different parts of~~ ^{the menace of the new woman} society and an element of sexual deviance - propagated by homosexuality and a rise of 'the new woman'. Desperately clinging onto conservative norms, this era felt like liberal and disruptive factors were menacing and did not welcome change - introducing a sense of dichotomy and contrast into society as opposing forces clashed rather than embracing their differences. As such, 'menace' finds itself to be an omnipresent factor within both novels.

In 'Dracula', Stoker focuses his ^{storyline} ~~storyline~~ on reflecting general colonial fears at the time, with the British Empire ~~feeling the presence~~ ^{anticipating the} ~~white~~ ^{menace} ~~face~~ of 'other' foreign powers. Culturally implemented into the theme of the 'imperial Gothic', Stoker utilises setting to permeate the fears of Herbert Johnathan Van Helsing - a successful emblem of the West. Dracula's castle is described as "raised over a waste of desolation".

a rather dystopian view of a foreign world in contrast to the gleaming West. Wilde, on the other hand, chooses to localise his fear of a menacing figure to a dichotomy of classes, though the ^{dynamic} separation between affluent West and menacing East remains the same. The "grimy streets" and "gravelly squares" allude to a deathly East-end of London, which the upper class does not venture into aside from Doris. Moreover, the "quivering hunger" for opium seems to riddle his character and allows the reader to perceive how the menace of lower class ^{the} debauchery can be a threat to the refined upper class. Similarly, Steiner maintains his 'East-West' contrast with the foreign menace of Oracula in "the mighty streets of your London" - with his yearning of praise introducing an unsettling desire to ~~consume~~ ^{consume} it. His close proximity to "Regent's Park Zoo" epitomises his menace to British society as he is within grasp of an imperial emblem of affluence. As such, Steiner and Wilde ~~both~~ ^{both} reflect the menace of 'the other', while maintaining the common geographical dynamics of the time, leading the reader to perceive the unknown as inevitably menacing.

✶ A monogamous Victorian society also felt threatened

by the ~~presence~~ menace of sexual deviance - whether that be in women or the ~~complexion~~ ^{undertaking} of homosexual acts. Wilde expresses Dorian's fear of revealing his homosexual tendencies through the dynamic between him and Basil. When Basil admits "I sought to imprison in my brain some curious dream which I feared I may awake", he admits to padding the 'curiosity' of homosexual acts with Dorian - initially sparked by his aesthetic appreciation of Dorian's "fine scarlet lips". The menace of Casanova's society, which Wilde felt personally in his ~~quest~~ ^{trial} for homosexual indecency, is felt by Dorian and pushes him into a state of panic like a "hunted animal"; the use of "hunted" suggesting the menace of societal judgement is being on him. The cathartic release of Basil's murder, a structural climax of the novel, is epitomised through "Talking again and again" which also happens to be undeniably phallic due to the penetrating force of the knife. ~~Blaker also feels~~ ~~menace~~ ~~Stoker also~~ ~~shows~~ Blaker to feel the menace of sexual deviance, though this is because it threatens the stable relationship with his wife Mina. The "wicked, burning desire" he feels is so intellectual, as "wicked" and "desire" should be opposing - but go hand-in-hand here. As such,

the ^{base} ^{line} of sexual gratification almost overpowers him as he feels the "longorous ecstasy" of lust, posing as a threat to his conservative relationship which epitomises Victorian woman. To such, Wilde sends the message to the reader of how societal judgment can be ~~of course~~ seen as menacing to those who are deviant, while Stoker portrays sexual deviance itself as a menace to honourable figures.

Finally, is the menacing presence of the 'new woman' who experienced an uprising at the end of the 19th Century and strongly questioned the status quo of gender norms - highly threatening to those who wished to suppress women. Here, both novelists take opposing sides, with Stoker providing a message red flag to those females who wished to be sexually independent and warning them against posing as a menace to Victorian norms. Lucy Westonra appears to be far too debauched in her ways, ~~existing~~ wondering "Why can't they let a girl marry three men?" - a point of outrage to a commonly monogamous society. This Lucy, as a figure of menace, reaches her demise as "those her" "eyes unkeen and full of hell-fire, rather than the pure, gentle ones we know"

indicates to the reader how her stance as the 'new woman' has led to a tarnishing of her previous purity and innocence. Instead, she has almost turned Satanic in the "hell-fire" that burns deep within her. Wilde, in direct juxtaposition, utilises the concern of society and characterises it as a figure of hypocrisy, greed and general insensitivity - Lord Henry. When his wife is portrayed as a "bird of paradise that had been shut out all night in the rain" it reveals to the reader her beauty and charisma has been ruined by her husband who has her "shut out" and been generally oppressive. The overall motif of birds is continued as he notices Sybil Vane to have "the joy of a caged bird in her voice" which denotes a sense of entrapment and male dominance. By evoking pathos in the audience, Wilde encourages the 'new woman' to continue acting as a menace to societal norms and to reach a point of liberation from the typical 'Angel of the Home' (a poem at the time) image of a domesticated woman. As such, both authors have taken note of the menacing figure of 'the new woman' to Victorian society - but portrayed it in a way to either tackle, or endorse this figure of menace.

Overall, it seems that the perception of 'the other', acts of sexual deviance, and the presence of 'the new woman' all fall under menacing threats within the context of Post-industrial British society. Both authors align their views with fear of foreign bodies, whether that be a foreign empire or a foreign portion of society, with an interesting similarity of the East being as a figure of menace and the West experiencing fear over this menace. Sexual deviance seemed to differ slightly, with Stoker embracing the typical view that debauched sexual acts are a menace themselves, whereas Wilde sees society as menacing towards those who wish to be sexually deviant - leading to a Catholic structured turning point - 'Dorian Gray'. This divergence widens as they discuss the 'new woman' as a menace to society, with Stoker having the figure of a domestic goddess, while Wilde serves to undermine fears of a liberated female and endorses their pursuit of societal freedom. Ultimately, 'fin de siècle' anxieties of a looming 20th century serve to introduce general fears and introduce 'menace' as a threat to conservative roots.



In the introduction, this candidate makes interesting links between menace, fin de siècle anxieties and fears of the other, sexual deviancy, and the menace posed by liberalism. A very wide range of ideas are written about concisely and with purpose and, in doing so, contexts are made an integral part of the essay.

The candidate's analysis of their chosen quotations and exploration of the ways in which the writers have created the sense of menace which pervades the novels is often evaluative and considers multiple meanings and potential interpretations with sophistication.



Make sure you think about what the specific question is asking you and shape your answer to this. Don't try to force pre-prepared points into your essay.

Question 11

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present inequality.'

This was the second most popular question on the paper and was answered well at all levels.

Most candidates were able to identify an aspect of inequality to centre their argument around such as gender, class, race, religion, wealth, power or education, with strong answers often considering a range of different aspects of inequality. Many focused primarily on sexual inequality, however there were also many fruitful explorations of the social inequality which Tess's parents encourage her to challenge, which Bronte uses to shape so much of Nelly Dean's narrative, or which Woolf explores in her presentation of Clarissa and Peter.

Those writing on the Hosseini also looked at the part played by religion in determining inequality, often finding useful links with Hardy. Those candidates who focused on the ways in which characters attempted to transcend inequality often wrote coherent and thoughtful arguments, sometimes making surprising and thought-provoking comparisons, such as between Tess and Heathcliff's attempts to break away from their lowly origins, or Mariam and Clarissa's restricted positions within their marriages due to the expectations of women within their social class. Comparisons between Victorian society and 21st century Afghan society under the Taliban were often good, but some suffered from a simplistic view of women's roles. The best answers made a choice in the introduction of which depictions of inequality they aimed to explore and focused on these for the duration.

There was some conflation of inequality with the mistreatment of female characters or immoral behaviour (such as Rasheed and Heathcliff beating their wives); those candidates who were able to link these details with a specific aspect of inequality such as the unequal treatment of men and women under the law, or the sexual double standards were usually much more successful. It was necessary to tailor these types of points to the specific question in order to make their relevance explicit. It was also rarely helpful to focus solely on one character as this limited the scope of the response. For example, the relatively minor character of Isabella in *Wuthering Heights* was sometimes the only character discussed in detail, while Heathcliff, Cathy, Nelly and the younger generation of characters were not considered at all, meaning that candidates were unable to demonstrate their understanding of the entire novel or to extend their argument about inequality beyond a single point.

Context to do with women's property rights was often well used, as were ideas about inequalities stemming from physical appearance or beauty, although a number of candidates seemed unaware of the historical setting of *Wuthering Heights* and equated this with its time of writing. There was less focused contextual discussion for *A Thousand Splendid Suns* beyond general notions of the fundamentalist society keeping women in the home as property of their husbands or fathers, although some candidates were able to usefully discuss the differences between life under Soviet and Taliban rule. There was a tendency in those candidates answering on *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* to make rather general contextual comments about religious views in Victorian England and Hardy's own beliefs. There were also a number of over-emphatic comments about Hardy's sexual arousal upon witnessing the execution of Martha Brown which were rarely made relevant to the topic at hand. On occasion, the purpose of the texts was considered as largely one of social commentary, which rather reduced consideration of their literary methods and value.

Comparisons and connections between the texts were made very successfully, with characters, settings and narrators often linked. Comparisons between narrative methods were often very well explored, enabling candidates to receive credit for both AO2 and AO4 at once. Many compared Jilil and Nana's contrasting houses within *A Thousand Splendid Suns* with *Wuthering Heights* and

Thrushcross Grange, considering these as symbols of wider inequalities within their respective societies. Some of the best responses made perceptive comparisons between Hosseini and the pre-1900 texts by evaluating the ongoing challenges faced by women in society.

Both *Wuthering Heights* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* present inequality through the societal convention of marriage and the lens of society. Both novelists seek to challenge conventional society as irrational and repressive of human nature and do so through the portrayals of Heathcliff and Catherine's romance and Jalil and Mariam's relationship at the start and end of their novels. By challenging the inequalities primarily towards women, both Hosseini and Brontë's ~~books~~ novels can be ~~read~~ interpreted through feminism. However, societal inequality in *WH* is arguably more focused upon the impact of the Industrial revolution. Nonetheless, both Hosseini and Brontë seek to portray inequality in marriage and society as irrational and ultimately fatal.

Both Hosseini and Brontë challenge the inequality of women in society through the ~~inequality~~ characteristic inequalities they depict in marriage. Marriage in the respective context of both novels was viewed as a societal expectation, perhaps most likely due to the entrenched presence of religion in both Victorian England and Afghanistan. As an element of Victorian conventionalism, marriage in *Wuthering Heights* is used to highlight how women were viewed as the property of their husbands, and this is corroborated by the English Common Law of the period. Heathcliff and Isabella's marriage illustrates how men ~~use~~ would use women to strengthen their own position within society, thus reducing them to the equivalence of a pawn in their socio-economic 'game of life'. This can be seen through the fact that Heathcliff uses his marriage to Isabella to exact his revenge on Hindley and Edgar by ~~having~~ forcing Hinton to marry Catherine and thus gain the property of ~~The~~ ~~Grange~~ ~~Grange~~. Crucially, because her only value to Heathcliff is to bear a child, it becomes clear that women were merely viewed in a domestic sphere. Comparatively, in *AFSS* Hosseini conveys a similar ~~to~~ ^{motif} idea of women being viewed as child bearers and domesticated through the marriage of Rasheed and Mariam. ~~As~~ Mariam's importance to Rasheed in this sense ~~can~~ is demonstrated by Hosseini when after her miscarriage 'a change had come over Rasheed'. This is corroborated by the juxtaposition of Rasheed's

habitation as he goes out of his way to make a crib for the baby as a "surprise" - which suggests excitement - and then the short, monosyllabic sentences after the miscarriage mixed with his sharp tone when refusing to bury the child, ~~instead suggests~~. This ~~perhaps~~ reflects ~~how marriage for women~~. Perhaps Hesseini does so to reflect the idea that marriage is a source of suffering and repression for women as Rasheed feels superior to the extent he can justify physically abusing both Mariam and Laila. This can be seen with the dynamic imagery of "he raised the belt again, and this time came for Mariam" - ~~again~~; ~~the use of again~~ ~~at~~ Hesseini's use of again alludes to the normality of this experience and perhaps the universality of this experience for women in Afghanistan. Thus, both Hesseini and Brontë allude to the ^{gender} inequalities within marriage which express male chauvinism at the ^{physical} expense of women. In both novels, women physically suffer due to societal expectations of childbirth and ~~thus~~ consequently are paled into insignificance by men as ~~Isabella~~ as Brontë alludes to by Isabella's death, and Hesseini alludes to by Mariam's and Laila's invisibility and treatment as if they were 'not worthy of his opinion.'

Following on from this, both Brontë and Hosseini challenge social inequality within their respective contexts of ~~their~~ novels. They ~~present~~ criticise societal expectations and pressures as irrational and this can be seen with Jalil's rejection of Mariam. ~~Jalil's~~ The limited omniscient narrative from Mariam's perspective is used by Hosseini in order for the reader to sympathise with her, ~~but~~ thus making her rejection all the more shocking and emotive. ~~The~~ The fact ~~Jalil~~ Hosseini later reveals that Jalil rejected her "for fear of losing face", and the regretful tone underpinned by the fact it was a letter for Mariam to read, ~~used to~~ makes the reader criticise the ~~surfer~~ harsh and intense societal pressures in Afghanistan which force Jalil to act irrationally and send her off to get married. Likewise, in WH, Catherine rejects Heathcliff as a potential suitor as it would "degrade" her to marry him. Brontë ~~uses~~ structurally uses this moment as the catalyst for ^{de} intense emotional suffering of both Catherine and Heathcliff, whilst metaphorically using the landscape and their desire to roam the moors freely to insinuate their natural compatibility. Brontë portrays ^{Catherine's} her love for Edgar as lacking depth due to her love of his youth, good looks and wealth which ^{would} make her "the greatest woman in the neighbourhood".

Thus ~~together~~ Contrastingly, Brontë juxtaposes the depthless love with the intense, vivid and natural imagery associated with her passion for Heathcliff which resembles "the eternal reeks beneath" and is "necessary". By doing so, Brontë is challenging the societal pressures of the Victorian era^{for a woman} to marry for wealth and status, perhaps reflective of her own life and her decision not to marry. Evidently, both novelists ~~novels~~ reveal that societal inequalities induced by the societal expectations and the societal pressures ~~at the~~ in both periods were irrational and opposed human nature to find comfort and love. Hesse's portrayal of Jalil's regret and Brontë's depiction of Catherine and Heathcliff roaming the moors, ~~after death~~ both events crucially after death, illustrate that succumbing to societal pressures is suppressing their human desires, which psychoanalysts would suggest is a sign of a weak ego. Thus perhaps both novelists suggest that societal inequality is unnatural and forced which suppresses human nature, therefore is fatal.

On balance, both novels present inequality through the lens of society and marriage and criticise societal expectations within

Goth mediums. Arguably Hosseini challenges the inequality more due to the narrative perspective being female which encourages the reader to sympathise more with Marjane and Laila's experiences and suffering at the hands of inequality within their marriages to Rasheed and society. Nonetheless Brontë does illustrate how inequality in marriage leads to female suffering through the shift in narrative perspective which with the use of Isabella's letter. ~~As to~~ But ultimately, both Hosseini and Brontë should take on feminist



This response to Question 11 on *Wuthering Heights* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was placed at the top of Level 5.

It was awarded 18 marks for AO1 and 2, and 20 marks for AO3 and 40.

A total of 38 out of 40.

This answer has a focused introduction which narrows down the focus to a specific aspect of inequality, while also indicating that the candidate will cover aspects of the whole novels. It begins to make evaluative comments about the various types of inequality evident in *Wuthering Heights* which are developed to explore how both writers challenge inequality, making reference to authorial intent.

As the essay continues, detailed connections and comparisons are made in almost every paragraph, using a range of starting points including contextual factors, gender, and natural imagery.

The final paragraph on narrative voice starts well, however it is inconclusive, presumably because the candidate ran out of time. This means that the essay ends rather abruptly, but nevertheless it is a great example of a concise and well-focused response.



Connections and comparisons should be made throughout the essay- try to include them in your introduction, conclusion and in most of your paragraphs.

In both 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' by Khaled Hosseini and 'Wuthering Heights' by Emily Brontë, inequality is presented as the inevitable result of a change in ~~a society~~ brutally patriarchal and strictly hierarchical societies. These inequalities came in the forms of gender-based inequality and class-based inequality, and in each case education is the key factor which can reduce these inequalities to an extent.

When considering the ^{low social status} ~~lack of education~~ of characters such as Man'om in 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' ('ATSS') and Heathcliff in 'Wuthering Heights' ('WH'), it is unsurprising that they are ~~at the bottom of the social ladder~~ uneducated; Man'om, being a "harani" an illegitimate child, is constantly labelled a "harani" by her own mother; just as Heathcliff is labelled a "gypsy" by almost everyone in the Earnshaw household when he first arrives. The derogatory labelling which must be endured by the two ^{emphasises that they are} ~~is a result of them being~~ socially inferior to other characters. Not only does this social inequality mean that they are treated rather poorly by others, but it also ensures that they have limited access to education - a tool which could be used to raise their social standing in time periods where social upheavals were ^{occurring} ~~not uncommon~~. ~~In 19th century~~ Victorian England, ~~the~~ Victorian England was undergoing massive social change as the industrial revolution took place and people moved to the city to

and work in manufacturing factories; as social reforms took place, the position of the gentry on the social ladder became precarious, and people began to climb the ladder to become the landed gentry - such as Heathcliff, who ~~was~~ ^{became} a gentleman ~~only by the "appearance"~~ ever since he mysteriously gained wealth and education after disappearing for three years. Similarly, in Afghanistan many social reforms were being made by King Amanullah in the 1920s, including providing education for all men and women; unfortunately, this was heavily resisted by the more conservative rural communities, who were culturally indoctrinated to believe that these educational ideals disrupted their religious ones - as is seen in 'ATSS' when women are eventually banned from leaving the house, let alone having an education. The only form of education that an illegitimate child like Manam has is that of her prayers, taught by Mullah Faizullah.

As ~~can be~~ seen in both novels, the ^{class-based} social inequality faced by characters at the bottom of the social ladder is brought about by a lack of education, and for characters like Heathcliff, who manages to gain an education later in life, it is possible to raise his ^{social} position, though artificially as he does not have the ^{appearance} ~~appearance~~ of a gentleman, only the ~~outward appearance of one~~ education and wealth of one, whilst for characters like Manam, for whom →

it is impossible to gain an education due to the double discrimination she faces as a woman and a "harami". ~~Her situation is even worse~~

Due to the brutal patriarchal construct of war-torn Afghanistan, even if Mariam had been educated, there is no certainty that she would have lived a better life; Laila's existence is testimony to this as she had been educated until her marriage to Rasheed. Due to gender-based discrimination, Mariam and Laila end up in the same situation: married to an abusive husband, who holds a "gun barrel" to his wife's mouth. Rasheed's violent and abusive nature is a result of the hyper-masculine, conservative ideals he has been brought up with; he constantly degrades women by commenting on their shamelessness, claiming that "a woman's face is her husband's business only" and that she should protect her "honor and namoos" to maintain the whole family's honor. The use of possessive vocabulary, such as when Rasheed compares the values of his wives to cars, emphasizes that he views women as property and reinforces the popular viewpoint at the time that women are inferior to men. This is also made clear by the Taliban interpretations of Sharia Law, with which they claim that women must follow the tradition

of 'Purdah' (veiling themselves) as customary to Pashtunwali (Pashtun culture), and ~~must~~ must not leave the house without a 'Mahram' (male relative).

Women were also forced out of government jobs and men's education was banned. Ironically, it is social inequality which led to this gender-based discrimination as the Taliban ~~there~~ ^{consisted} largely of the poorer Pashtun tribe who were educated in 'Madrasahs' (charity-based schools which teach about religion) since they could not go to normal schools, and since these 'Madrasahs' were mostly in rural, conservative areas, the people educated would reflect those extreme and conservative interpretations of Islam found in the rural areas of Afghanistan, including expectations of women. ~~in so~~

Similarly, in 'WH', women face gender-inequality through the law; just as Mariam and Laila are unable to leave Rasheed and he claims that there "isn't a court in the country" that would blame him for ^{the} abuse of his wives, Isabella is unable to escape the trapping institution that is her ^{abusive} marriage to Heathcliff since, before the Matrimonial Act of ~~the~~ the 1880s, divorce was undetectable. It was also not possible for women to inherit

property before the Marriage Property Act many decades later, so Heathcliff's cruel plan of revenge by forcing Catherine Linton to marry his dying son, so that he can inherit Thrushcross Grange once Linton dies, depends largely on this gender-based inequality. Unfortunately, this gender-based inequality is not one which can be overcome by education, since many of the female characters are educated, for instance Laila and Catherine Linton, but they still face horrible circumstances.

In conclusion, both social ^{class} inequality and gender-based inequality are brought about by change, since attempts at reforms and social upheavals ~~can~~ cause resistance which leads to harsh enforcement of disenchanted ideals. ~~the 'LATISS' and the 'LUTAL' the~~ ~~the~~ changes. Perhaps both authors were commenting on the harsh reality of the brutal times they heard of and lived through, showing the direct link to the brutal patriarchy.



This essay on Question 11 answered on *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *Wuthering Heights*.

It was placed near the top of Level 4, gaining 16 marks for AO1 and 2 and 15 for AO3 and 4.

A total of 31 out of 40.

While this essay has a clear and sustained focus on the inequalities of class and gender within the novels, and considers a range of contextual factors in detail, it does not quite manage to put forward a critical argument overall.

There is a close focus on the texts, but there is a tendency to treat them as real rather than to consider authorial choices and craft. There are the beginnings of evaluation at times, particularly when considering education as a means of overcoming inequality, but there is not quite enough to merit Level 5.



Try to strike a balance when considering both the big picture and the small details when analysing your chosen novels.

Question 12

'Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts make use of narrative voice.'

There were a number of interesting comparisons of the way in which writers utilised narrative voice in order to present different perspectives: Hardy's omniscient and often intrusive narrator in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; Woolf's use of free indirect narration and stream of consciousness; Hosseini's use of focalisers and the different and often unreliable narrators in *Wuthering Heights* all provided broad scope for discussion of the writers' craft and intentions.

There was also thoughtful consideration of the gender of narrative voices and how this connected with the themes of each novel. The best answers were able to identify features of the narrative voice before going on to analyse the effects and meanings created by these and the reasons writers had chosen to tell their stories in a particular style. There were some candidates who had not understood what narrative voice meant and these essays tended to be limited to character analysis or plot narration rather than presenting a focused argument in answer to the question.

The question often led students to thoughtful and meaningful analysis of the writer's craft, however some struggled to integrate their contextual points into the rest of the essay for AO3, and often wrote about contexts in isolation. Better answers considered how the narrative voices allowed writers to explore such issues as gender, power, marginalisation and morality. Links to Victorian morality and social expectations and the respective authors' attempts to change them were well-made. Those writing about *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was often written about extremely well, considering the ways in which Hardy's narratorial voice objectifies Tess while he seeks to exonerate her, with some suggesting a similarity in his and Alec's treatment of women.

Those candidates who were aware of authorial intent often made very successful points about narrative voice. Some excellent work was seen on *Mrs Dalloway*, exploring Woolf's desire to forge a new kind of narrative with stream of consciousness and multiple perspectives overlapping, and comparing this with Bronte's multi-layered narrative, considering how the gender of the narrative voices related to the authors' gender and contextual consideration of Woolf's feminism and Bronte's choice to use a pen-name.

This essay on *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Wuthering Heights* was given 20 marks in AO1 and 2, and 19 in AO3 and 4.

A total of 39 marks out of 40.

Brontë and Hardy use narrative voice to illuminate the conditions of females in nineteenth century Britain. Hardy's Victorian novel offers his social criticism, as an advocate for women's suffrage, Hardy uses his novel to make a political statement regarding industrialisation and the persecution of women in a supposedly modern and progressive society. Brontë also comments on the immoral standards of Victorian society but lets humanity take its course in her novel, there is little authorial intervention in contrast to Hardy, thus Brontë's more Romantic novel uses narrative voice to also explore human emotion.

Brontë uses the main narrator Nelly as a rational voice whose judgement highlights the female condition raising judgement from readers. Catherine Earnshaw says to Nelly, 'If I were in heaven, Nelly, I should be extremely miserable' to which Nelly responds 'Because you are not fit to go there... All sinners would be miserable in heaven'. ~~Therefore~~ Thrushcross Grange represents 'heaven' as Heathcliff called it earlier in the novel, it would be the ideal place for Catherine to fulfil her designated role in society as the Angel in the House. This stereotype was imposed onto women - they were to be dutiful and responsible exerting their power in the domestic sphere. Yet Catherine does not want this 'heaven', she 'has no more business to marry Edgar Linton' than 'to be in heaven' but she

must marry Edgar as it would 'degrade' her to marry Heathcliff. She cannot marry below her status as her reputation would be tarnished in society, she and her children would be 'beggars', so it ~~is~~ is her social choice to marry Edgar - ~~best~~ it's best for her survival. Yet Nelly calls Catherine a 'sinner' for this choice, she ~~says~~ judges Catherine's decision ^{to be} ~~to be~~ 'worst of all' 'the greatest woman of the neighbourhood' as expected by society to be 'worst of all'. ~~Nelly~~ Brontë shows through Nelly's condemnation how corrupted Victorian society was, but the ^{early} nineteenth century female reader would sympathise with Catherine as the National Education Act was not introduced till 1880, Brontë in 1847 was not familiar with a world that allowed social mobility particularly for women, women were confined and could only secure their future through marriage as shown by Catherine. However this immoral choice is criticised by Brontë through Nelly, ~~and~~ God sees the corruption and denies her of literal 'heaven' as she is a 'sinner' for marrying for wealth but there was no other alternative in society, thus Brontë condemns this. Brontë herself did not marry which further corroborates this argument - she ~~may~~ ^{might} ~~have~~ not have wanted to give in to the corruption and be labelled a 'sinner' so she could herself obtain 'heaven'.

Hardy also criticises the female condition using his omniscient narrator, Tess is introduced as a 'mere vessel of emotion

unfettered by experience' - she is there to carry out what is expected of her by society, similarly, Catherine is ~~supposed~~ ^{supposed} to wed the 'rich' Edgar Linton, women are presented as vessels by both Hardy and Brontë; they have no control nor independence. 'Tess' was published in 1891 which meant Hardy had seen more progression in society as the National Education Act (1880), Married Woman's Property Rights Act (1882) and Reform Acts that opened the vote to labourers (1887) were put into place. Therefore, it is implied Tess has more social mobility than Catherine ~~as she is~~ Tess is with 'her trained National teachings and Standard knowledge'. Tess has had an education which would be advantageous to a modern reader as it implies she could make a livelihood but in reality due to her lower class it made her 'mentally older' than her parents. The generational gap is exacerbated by education and so there was 'a gap of two hundred years' it was as though 'the Jacobean and the Victorian Ages were juxtaposed'. Hardy's narrator shows how what should be perceived as an advantage is Tess's downfall as she bears more responsibility - there is a role reversal, her mother is the 'happy child' so Tess is inclined to 'claim kin' to for financial security, the responsibility and guilt she feels pushes her to do this but this leads to her downfall. The uneducated Joan and Jack Durbeyfield are unaware about the truth of their 'lineage', they are in their sheltered valley away from the corruption of rising

bourgeois society so do not know about Alec's true intentions as the 'old one' there to 'tempt Eve' (Tess). They think he is a 'gentleman'. Hardy's narrator sympathises with the rural poor condemning fading aristocracy and the Biblical archetype and allegorisation criticise the emerging industrialisation, bourgeois society and 'new' money; it is his didacticism.

Brontë uses a Chinese box structure and also includes Lockwood as a narrator to be representative of urban civility - he represents the outside world. Through Lockwood's voice, Brontë shows how damaging female expectations were not just limited to Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Lockwood was 'thrown into the company of the most fascinating creature: a real goddess' but he 'confess(ed) with shame' that he 'never told' his 'love vocally' which caused the 'poor innocent to doubt her own senses' she was 'overwhelmed with confusion at her supposed mistake' and was forced to 'decamp'. Brontë shows how even cultivated women were at the mercy of this unjust expectation, although Lockwood made the advances perhaps physically ~~as~~ (not 'vocally'), it was the woman's 'mistake'. Through Lockwood, Brontë shows how difficult the situation was for women, but she sympathises by calling her a 'poor innocent', it also suggests Lockwood understands the unjust situation yet he does not prevent her from

decamping, implying that males did not fully comprehend the female predicament, he ~~doesn't~~ does not understand that her reputation would be tarnished.

Hardy's narrative voice is much more didactic than Brontë's, she uses multiple characters to cover her voice but Hardy's narrator is clearly his own voice. This is evident in his description of Talbothays and Flintcomb Ash. The polarisation of these two is effective in showing Hardy's viewpoint. The 'ethereal' Talbothays with its content dairymilk that saw a 'decline in demand' juxtaposed with the 'wintry' Flintcomb Ash where the 'drum never stopped'. Hardy's narrator looks over Tess and says how 'there was no respite for Tess', she must keep working to supply ~~her~~ the insatiable appetite. She is placed there by Farmer Groby who was previously a worker for Alec - he worked his way up in this corrupt bourgeois society and 'by his orders Tess was placed on the platform of the machine' 'supplying the man who fed it'. Tess is at Groby's mercy now, before Angel hit him for commenting on her beauty. This insatiable appetite is also mirrored when Tess 'mercilessly ripped her eyebrows' as it 'insured against aggressive admiration', she had to strip her beauty due to the insatiable lustful men that accompanied the industrialised bourgeois society, Hardy shows the nihilistic effect of industrialisation and he criticises

the lustful men that accompany it. This infiltration is mirrored by Heathcliff who ~~was~~ entered the ranks of gentry due to bourgeois society, he subverts power structures by enslaving Hareton (nightful heir) so both Brontë and Hardy also criticize bourgeois society that consumed men.

To conclude, the two authors use narrative voice to clearly show their readers the ~~force~~ toxic effect of using women and imposing stereotypes onto them. Nelly loves Catherine Linton wholly ~~as she~~, she is a dichotomy of the 'angel' and 'devil' ('devil of a temper'), ~~she~~ she does not fit any stereotype and is perfect in Nelly's and therefore the reader's eyes. ~~Hardy's~~ Hardy's narrator sympathises with Tess, his pastoral novel is nostalgic and critical of the Industrial Revolution, his own male gaze that views Tess as a 'diamond' after her rape is limiting his purpose but ~~she~~ he does elevate her and her status throughout his didactic novel. It contrasts with the melodrama and passion of Brontë's novel but both show the damaging effects of stereotypes on women in Victorian society through their use of narrative voice.



This candidate has chosen to focus on how the narrative voice is used to enhance a particular theme, in this case women's rights. This gives them the opportunity to bring in contextual knowledge, which some students struggled to do for this very technique focused question. Linking the writer's craft to the meanings being created ensures that this essay can balance all of the assessment objectives.

Comparisons are made between the levels of authorial intervention, the structure of the novels and the legal rights of women at different time periods. Many textual details are used to develop and make explicit the links between the novels – a good example of this is seen on the final page of the essay where at the end of a paragraph focusing primarily on Hardy, a point about Heathcliff's subjugation of Hareton is introduced to exemplify the idea that men are also oppressed by capitalism.



If a question focuses on an aspect of the writer's craft, think carefully about how you will include contextual factors in your answer.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance in this paper, candidates are offered the following advice.

- Use the first 15 minutes of the exam primarily to plan and select examples. This will lead to a more focused essay and enable candidates to develop ideas and points better. This is also a useful short exercise to practise as part of their revision.
- During planning time, it can be helpful to consider what order to make their points in to best develop their ideas.
- Write a clear introduction in which candidates make it clear how they are going to approach the key terms in the question and put forward an overall argument in answer to the question.
- For AO1/AO2, make sure a range of different techniques and examples is considered, rather than only single words from one part of the novel.
- The focus of your analysis of quotations should be on how the writers have created particular meanings and effects, rather than simply labelling them with literary or linguistic terminology.
- Quotations should not be too long, and should directly illustrate the point that is being made.
- Make meaningful connections between the two texts; discourse markers such as 'similarly' or 'in contrast' need to be followed up in detail to explore what the similarity or difference actually is.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

