

**A LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**H472**

For first teaching in 2015

**H472/02 Summer 2022 series**

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

### Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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## Paper 2 series overview

### Key point call out – H472/02 and its context in the specification

H472/02, the Comparative and Contextual Study, is one of the three components which make up OCR's A Level in English Literature. The examination requires candidates to choose one of five topics, firstly writing a critical appreciation of an unseen passage and secondly responding to a comparative essay question based on two set texts. This is a closed text examination.

Candidates are likely to perform well on the paper if they keep in mind the dominant assessment objective for each part: AO2 (the ways in which language, form and structure shape meaning) in the critical appreciation; AO3 (the significance and influence of contexts) in the comparative essay. They should also bear in mind the importance of AO1 throughout the exam, which includes coherent, accurate written expression.

The performance of candidates on this paper was considered overall to be impressive. However, there appeared to be a rise in problems associated with examination technique: rubric infringements and problems with time management, for example. There were also some issues with legibility in many responses. Despite these factors which affected a minority of scripts, examiners found their task interesting and rewarding, especially where they saw a real love of reading emerging in the written responses. Some texts in particular seem to have been inspiring and engaging: *My Antonia*, *Beloved*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *Native Son* and *Call It Sleep* have all been mentioned in this connection by examiners, who also appreciated brief references to wider reading apparently chosen by the students themselves, particularly in the Dystopian topic.

The unseen passages all inspired interesting and varied responses. Almost all candidates had grasped the importance of writing a critical appreciation which made links to relevant contexts. Examiners saw many excellent responses which provided a full and detailed analysis of the passage and referred to literary or historical contexts briefly, in a way which illuminated the passage without dominating the response.

## Exemplar 1

		This extract begins with an almost
		desperation on Osgood's part as
		he 'suddenly went out' and he 'went
		busily', conveying a sense of urgency
		through the use of adverbs that
		emphasises the tense atmosphere of the
		situation. In this way, Clark presents
		Osgood as the mediating force amongst
		his peers, trying to save his peers
		from acting with a selfish spontaneity
		that will potentially worsen the divide
		between his group and the cattle
		thieves. The use of a mediator
		is paralleled in Fitzgerald's novel
		'The Great Gatsby', as Nick
		creates the metaphorical bridge between
		Gatsby and Daisy; <sup>however,</sup> <del>and</del> Osgood acts
		as a boundary/blockade between the
		local men and the cattle thieves.

This example shows a candidate focusing in detail on the passage in Question 1 and making an imaginative link to a set text, *The Great Gatsby*, to provide context. The response then returns promptly to its main business, analysis of the unseen passage.

Some candidates needed to read with more care, however. Each passage is provided with a headnote giving helpful information, but in some cases (especially in connection with the Dystopian topic) the headnote seemed to have been overlooked. Some candidates thought that the headnote was part of the literary material and included it in their AO2 analysis. There was also some inaccurate reading of passages, involving some confusion about how many characters were present or which one was speaking; a little more time and care spent reading would solve this problem. Critical terminology was generally used accurately, but a growing tendency to identify words according to their grammatical function was not helpful, especially where errors were introduced in the use of familiar terms like 'adjective'. The term 'in medias res' ('in the midst of things') was used quite frequently to make an analytical point about the way the passage opens; candidates should remember that the passages are all extracted from longer works and that the opening and closing points are chosen by the question setter, not the writer.

The comparative essays were usually substantial and often effective, incorporating reference to texts, contexts and a range of views. Successful essays picked up on all of the prompt words in the quotation and selected their material accordingly. The most successful responses were distinguished by a coherent thread of argument, so that the material was not just well chosen but also artfully deployed; these essays were often interestingly written and grew to an enlightening conclusion. In successful responses, comparison becomes a technique through which the texts can be used to shed light on each other. Among more ordinary responses, there appeared to be an increase in this session of essays which amounted to catalogues of material, where recall was the skill, most often called into use. These responses almost seemed to rely on the examiner to pick out the material which was most relevant or useful. In these responses, some candidates eventually ran out of time, possibly offering some notes or a plan for which examiners could not give credit. Some omitted to write a conclusion or wrote a very brief one which simply restated the question. Others, after writing 'Finally' or 'In conclusion', went round the essay again more briefly, sometimes offering some of the same examples. Most cases of this kind would have been helped by more time and thought on structure, enabling a shorter and more focused response.

Exemplar 2

		romantic
		to conclude, love is a central theme
		within <del>the</del> both novels, so it
		would not be seen as unusual to
		suggest the characters are shaped
		by it. Although women are depicted
		as more heavily impacted, men are
		often shaped by relationships as a
		result of this

This candidate, having written an essay in response to Question 8 (a) which was quite thoughtful and interesting, completes it with a brief and reductive conclusion. A little more time, thought and detail could provide the essay with a conclusion which does it justice.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engaged with the imaginative qualities of their set texts and the unseen passages</li> <li>selected material carefully and wrote to a reasonable length</li> <li>read the unseen extract and its headnote with care, so that their responses were considered and well informed</li> <li>chose two principal texts for the comparative essay and wrote evenly on both</li> <li>wrote a thoughtful conclusion which grew out of the comparative essay</li> <li>managed their time well and followed the rubric accurately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prioritised the reproduction of prepared material, especially context</li> <li>included too much material and wrote lengthy, shapeless responses</li> <li>started writing very early, so that they misunderstood parts of the extract and missed helpful information in the headnote</li> <li>tried to force a lot of different texts into the response, making comparison difficult</li> <li>wrote a brief, dismissive conclusion, or a lengthy one which repeated the essay</li> <li>ran out of time or infringed the rubric by answering on two different topics.</li> </ul>

## Question 1

### American Literature 1880–1940

- 1 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading of American Literature 1880–1940. [30]

It was evident that some candidates had not given much thought to the Wild West and were surprised to find this theme appearing; others had read about the US frontier and manifest destiny and could make good use of these ideas. Many responses took an interest in the dates of setting (near the beginning of the period) and publication (right at the end); some suggested that the distance provided by 1940 enabled insights which would not have been available in the 1880s. The most successful responses focused primarily on the events of the passage and analysed the characterisation of Osgood and Farnley; they also identified the narrator as one of the men and took an interest in the way the group – or the mob – functions. The sympathetic responses of the horses to the tide of feeling in the passage was often picked up imaginatively by candidates, as were the suggestions of a racist double-standard in Osgood's views of the 'Indians' as 'savages'. Considerations of 'the law' and 'justice', and the possible differences between them, provided an excellent way of responding to both text and context. There was an interesting division among candidates concerning where justice lies: most thought Osgood's caution was clearly right, but others were for the men taking the law into their own hands. Successful responses all noted that something – possibly the 'incident' of the title – is imminent at the end of the passage.

## Question 2 (a)

- 2 (a) F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*

'In American literature, success is often worshipped for its own sake.'

By comparing *The Great Gatsby* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. [30]

This was the least popular of the comparative essay topics and was not always well done: responses did not always seem to have a working definition of 'success' and often overlooked the word 'worshipped'. As usual, responses on *The Great Gatsby* often couldn't see much that was heroic or interesting about callous, deluded Jay Gatsby, but some were prepared to see him as a tragic figure, victim of magnificent ideals and delusions, albeit predictably doomed. Many candidates (like many characters in the novel) were prepared to take on trust the carefully planted insinuations about what Gatsby has actually done to make his money: killed someone? worked as a German spy? imported alcohol? helped fix the 1919 World Series? More successful essays preserved the notions of suspicion and ambiguity which exist in the novel. *The Grapes of Wrath* often provided the comparative text, but work was also seen on other texts, notably *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *The Age of Innocence*.

## Question 2 (b)

(b) John Steinbeck: *The Grapes of Wrath*

'American literature shows that people are better off in groups than as individuals.'

By comparing *The Grapes of Wrath* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view.

[30]

There was some impressive writing about the power of the group against the dreams and resourcefulness of the individual in response to this question, with excellent use of the vision of the preacher, Casey, and informed discussion of the Emersonian 'oversoul' and the appeal of Marxism in thirties America. Many responses chose to compare the functioning of the group in *The Grapes of Wrath* with the Romantic vision of the individual in *The Great Gatsby*, but there were also successful discussions which combined Steinbeck with Richard Wright's *Native Son*, for example.

## Question 2 (c)

(c) 'In American literature, suffering is often undeserved.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *The Great Gatsby* and/or *The Grapes of Wrath*.

[30]

This was the most popular of the three questions for this topic. Essays on *The Grapes of Wrath* again made strong headway here, often tying their arguments to solid research on Hoovervilles and the New Deal. Consideration of 'suffering' in *Gatsby* tended to push discussion onto the social roles of the Wilsons, often introducing powerful involvement with the waste land symbolism of the Valley of Ashes. It was sometimes difficult for candidates to show that the 'sufferings' of characters in Wharton's 1870s 'Old New York' were comparable with Steinbeck's depiction of homelessness and starvation. Some of the most interesting work was on Wright's *Native Son*, where candidates argued (following Wright's naturalism) that Bigger as a Black Man from Chicago's South Side was set up to fail, but that he also possessed something of the irregular grandeur of a tragic hero. Many were intrigued by the way Wright explores Marxist concepts of justice at the close of this novel. There was a lot of good work on that episodic novel, *Huckleberry Finn*, comfortable with its Civil War backdrop, Twain's satirical attitudes, and its tendency to myth-making. Candidates combined the American texts creatively, always aware of the historical issues informing them.

## Question 3

### The Gothic

- 3 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading of the Gothic.

[30]

Responses on the Gothic passage were the most mixed in quality and suffered the most interference from assumptions drawn from the set texts. There was inevitable confusion about dates, given an eighteenth century setting and nineteenth century publication, and also an assumption on the part of some candidates that the American setting could only mean Southern Gothic, despite the specificity in the headnote of New England; in general, these slips did not inflict too much damage on the response. Almost all responses dealt quite well with the atmospheric setting. Many commented on the illusion of movement of the dead man's features, referring to this as 'explained supernatural' or 'explained Gothic'. The entrance of the women created more challenges: there was some doubt as to which girl was which, and even in some cases as to how many girls there were. The paleness of all three figures led some to the conclusion that they were necessarily vampires, and the kiss was often judged to be an act of necrophilia. The girls were sometimes suspected of having killed the young man. This speculative material was never helpful since it took attention away from the literary expression of the passage. More successful responses kept their judgements more tentative and provisional. They responded to the archaic style and tone of the dialogue, often suggesting that the female figures could be seen as doppelgangers and ensured that they read to the end of the passage, dealing with the planned assignation. Few registered the title 'The White Old Maid', and barely any seemed to be familiar with the concept of an 'old maid'.

## Question 4 (a)

- 4 (a) Bram Stoker: *Dracula*

'In Gothic literature, there is no escape from the past.'

Consider how far you agree with this statement by comparing *Dracula* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic.

[30]

This was the least popular essay question on this topic, probably because it did not lend itself to discussion of sex and gender, which dominated discussion of *Dracula* in the other two essays. Some examiners reported exceptional writing on Gothic effects in *Beloved*, where the ghost of the child indeed allows no escape. In *Dracula*, however, answers often suggested that the past is represented by traditional gender roles and that the key trajectory of the novel is Stoker's punishment of Lucy Westenra for her attempt to break free. Examiners felt that *Dracula* was often reduced to three scenes: the possible seduction of Harker at the Count's Castle; the encounter with the voluptuous Brides; and the lurid death of Lucy at the hands of the 'Crew of Light'. Only the more successful responses ranged more widely in the novel.

## Question 4 (b)

(b) Angela Carter: *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*\*

'Gothic fiction suggests that very primitive forces lie beneath civilised life.'

By comparing *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*\* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. [30]

Responses on the primitive forces beneath civilised life were chiefly focused on sex and gender, usually choosing *Dracula* to accompany *The Bloody Chamber*. Again, the focus in *Dracula* was largely on Lucy as a transgressive female who is punished for her sins, and comparisons were drawn with *The Bloody Chamber*, credited as a Second Wave Feminist text where females are encouraged to break free of tradition and explore and enjoy their sexual opportunities. Jonathan Harker's encounters with Dracula and the three female vampires were also frequently cited. Candidates are exploring a wider range of Carter's stories, although the title story of the volume, 'The Lady of the House of Love' and 'The Snow Child' are still the most frequently discussed. In less successful responses there has been more use of writers' biographies (especially their relationships) to supply context, and some of the emerging discussion has been somewhat reductive.

## Question 4 (c)

(c) 'Gothic literature explores the fascination for what is forbidden.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Dracula* and/or *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*\*. [30]

This question was by far the most popular, and many candidates tackled it by using the two core texts in a similar style to the previous question: the 'forbidden' was generally characterised in terms of sex and gender and Stoker was seen as punitive, Carter as enabling. The drawback of this approach was that it tended to lead candidates away from an interest in Gothic literature. Another popular choice was *Frankenstein*, however, and this text brought in questions of religious faith and overreach which tended to take the candidates further into literary questions, rather than out of the texts to social history. There was also some good work on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which was especially successful where the responses focused on its Gothic effects. Another text widely referenced was *The Castle of Otranto*, which some candidates had evidently read and apparently enjoyed, and which gave a helpful sense of literary context to their responses. Some responses referenced recent popular Gothic fiction. This is a legitimate approach to context, and examiners welcome indications that candidates are enjoying and extending their range of reading; however, some responses were inclined to explain the plots of popular novels at some length, which was not helpful to the development of their arguments.

## Question 5

### Dystopia

- 5 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading of dystopian literature. [30]

Responses on the dystopian passage by Joanna Kavenna were generally quite successful; all candidates understood the passage and were capable of identifying familiar dystopian tropes. Experience suggests that the headnote is particularly important in relation to Dystopia, because the reader first has to understand the created world in which the narrative is set. In some cases, candidates were inclined to repeat the headnote to the examiner, as if it were their own explanation, or to analyse it for its AO2 effects. A few, however, apparently neglected to read it, and in these cases, it was difficult for them to tease out the nature of the story. Most responses picked up on the theme of fertility, however, and often made links to *The Handmaid's Tale* on that basis. They also noted how the prisoners were dehumanised by reference to them as numbers and commented on the presentation of the Protection Scientists with their quasi-religious garb and evidence of gene therapy. Some responses considered that the writing seemed quite dated and/or derivative given its publication date. Context was usually well handled, bringing in a wide variety of set texts and others, with Zamyatin's *We*, and set texts by Atwood, Orwell, Bradbury and P.D. James the most frequently cited. Interestingly, very few noticed or mentioned that the piece is written in the present tense.

## Question 6 (a)

- 6 (a) George Orwell: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

'The regimes in dystopian fiction show little respect for the truth.'

By comparing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. [30]

This was the least popular of the three essay questions, although the split for this topic was probably more even than for some of the others. Responses often focused on Winston Smith's role at the Ministry of Truth, often contextualising it with Orwell's work for the BBC. *Animal Farm* proved to be an excellent additional source, since the pigs' lies and misrepresentations are so direct, funny and memorable that they help to structure and point a clear argument. Most used *The Handmaid's Tale* for comparison, often showing how the issues surrounding truth and lies are more ordinary and transactional in this novel; a number of responses suggested that no one cared what the handmaids thought as long as they toed the line. In common with other responses to the other questions for this topic, there was plenty of contextual material drawn from political regimes of the 1930s and 40s and from our own time, with references to 'fake news' and even to 'Partygate'.

## Question 6 (b)

(b) Margaret Atwood: *The Handmaid's Tale*

'Dystopian fiction shows us the shock of losing freedoms which have been taken for granted.'

By comparing *The Handmaid's Tale* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. [30]

This was probably the most popular question of the three and candidates seemed to feel that they were on safe ground here; there were lengthy discussions of topics like surveillance, for example, familiar from previous sessions. This was a question which offered up the important concept of 'freedom', and for many candidates that was enough: they could begin immediately to reproduce their material on the limitations placed on individual liberty in totalitarian societies. Only the more successful responses considered the statement in its entirety, however, and dealt with the feelings of 'shock' and the notion that freedoms had once been 'taken for granted'. Thorough knowledge of *The Handmaid's Tale* was helpful here, and some could discuss in detail Offred's account of the curtailment of her freedom and the affronts she suffered when Gilead was first established. These responses often used Orwell for comparison and suggested that life before Big Brother is more distant and almost mythical in this novel, so the simple ordinary things recalled by Offred do not have a direct equivalent in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. For context, many referenced the growing pressure in the USA on Roe vs Wade, which was in fact overturned by the Supreme Court nine days after the exam took place and pointed out there is still a risk to individual freedoms concerning reproductive rights.

## Question 6 (c)

(c) 'In dystopian literature, the emphasis is too much on disaster, and not enough on hope.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, explore how far you agree with this view.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and/or *The Handmaid's Tale*. [30]

This was a popular question and tapped into a familiar area, balancing hope against disaster in the Dystopia topic. Candidates again tended to choose the core texts in their responses, but there was more of a range of material here: *The Road* was often cited, as were *Brave New World*, *Fahrenheit 451* and *A Clockwork Orange*; there was even a very occasional reference to *The Drowned World*. Some candidates also drew in material from young adult fiction, which worked well as long as it didn't come to dominate the essay or take the form of explanations of the plot. More successful responses chose two principal texts and allowed others to appear briefly as literary context; responses which anthologised five or six texts struggled to handle comparison effectively. Most responses examined the endings of the two core novels for evidence of hope or disaster; the more successful responses tackled the question of whether there was 'too much' disaster and questioned what might constitute 'too much'. One impressive discussion argued that the Dystopia form itself entirely depends on hope, however dark the situation becomes, and another lively response concluded that 'if all we wanted was disaster, we could just watch the news'. This kind of response suggested that candidates were thinking quite deeply about the form and its purposes.

## Question 7

### Women in Literature

- 7 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading concerning Women in Literature. [30]

Mary Wilkins Freeman's episode from a New England farm, complete with a cast of resolute, stubborn and opinionated New Englanders, proved a fruitful opportunity to show the force of matriarchy and received wisdom operating in an age of apparent feminist progress. Many pointed to the ominous offstage husband and the semi-tyrannical project of his unwanted barn. Some preferred discussing the apparent absence of female progress in the age of suffragettes, the New Woman and First Wave feminism, to exploring the relationship between the two women in the passage; some saw that the daughter's passivity and conservatism are in contrast to the 'feistiness' of the unreconstructed matriarch, Sarah Penn, who, we are told, is a kind of artist, albeit an ineffectual one, washing 'the frying pan with a conclusive air'. Relatively few responses engaged with the story's title, 'The Revolt of "Mother"'; they were possibly unsure about the characters' names and roles, and lacked the confidence to state that Sarah Penn, despite her apparent resignation to her role, may go on to stage a rebellion of some kind. Close reading was often successful, pointing to the energy of Sarah's verbs contrasted with the gentleness of Nanny's, and recognising the softness and prettiness of the childlike daughter contrasted with the toughness of her mother.

## Question 8 (a)

- 8 (a) Jane Austen: *Sense and Sensibility*

'Fiction by and about women suggests that lives are often shaped by romance.'

By comparing *Sense and Sensibility* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case. [30]

The last question swept up almost all the candidates here, but there were some responses to this question on the importance of romance in these texts. It was often answered by showing how little romance there was in the lives of nineteenth century women, battered down as they were by social structures, especially the law of entail. As the texts described were usually *Jane Eyre* and *Sense and Sensibility*, both of which were and are marketed as prestige romantic novels, the candidates seemed to be missing something. Rochester in particular seems to be an unappealing figure from the point of view of many candidates, who might prefer Jane to pursue a single life. Some responses introduced *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to discussion and were often very successful; Janie's search for a rewarding relationship gave them plenty of discussable material. *The Bell Jar* was also a useful resource, with its darkly humorous references to Esther's possible future as 'Mrs Buddy Willard'.

## Question 8 (b)

(b) Virginia Woolf: *Mrs Dalloway*

'Women are often portrayed as in control of the social world and social gatherings.'

By comparing *Mrs Dalloway* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. [30]

Examiners saw little or no work in response to this question; one marker reported finding this regrettable, suggesting it to be 'a disappointment that the question on women's control of the social world and social gatherings proved so unpopular, as it provides an opportunity to explore the options of characters on what has been generally considered a woman's most favourable ground.' It may be that candidates expect to write about a world in which women are disadvantaged and subdued in different ways and feel less comfortable writing about women 'in control'.

## Question 8 (c)

(c) 'Female figures in literature have to settle for what life offers them.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, explore how far you agree with this claim.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Sense and Sensibility* and/or *Mrs Dalloway*. [30]

This was by far the most popular comparative essay question for this topic. Candidates writing on this option seemed to think it inevitable that women over the last two hundred years had to settle for what life offered them. Sometimes *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* was adduced as a *bildungsroman* of escape and transcendence, but generally candidates preferred to write on *The Bluest Eye* and *The Bell Jar*, with their prisons of race and consumerism. Discussion of *Mrs Dalloway*, where the leading character's success, comfort and privilege is unignorable, was more nuanced. Work on *Sense and Sensibility* was very good indeed, with the tyranny of the female characters, Lady Middleton, Mrs John Dashwood and Mrs Ferrars picked up, men as well as women shown to be social pawns, and the distortions of Elinor's and Marianne's emotion under the force of social pressures very sensitively brought out. Responses generally focused on the problems and limitations faced by female figures, but were also ready to challenge the question's statement, calling on the unwavering determination of Jane Eyre, an uncompromising female character, or the hidden struggles of Edward Ferrars, who seems at one stage honour bound to 'settle' for Lucy Steele.

## Question 9

### The Immigrant Experience

- 9 Write a critical appreciation of this passage, relating your discussion to your reading concerning the Immigrant Experience. **[30]**

As in previous sessions this topic was once again significantly less popular than the others. Adichie's economy and suggestiveness helped some candidates with their readings of the passage from *Americanah*. Most noted that Auntie Uju is a generation older than the impressionable Ifemelu and therefore likely to be a bigger stakeholder in the American Dream. Many commented with apparent surprise on her facial expression, 'savage with hope', understanding this as a measure of the extent of her feelings. A number noted Ifemelu's use of both Igbo and English in their conversation, suggesting that this is an illustration of belonging to two different cultures. There were also comments on Uju's intention to take out her braids and straighten her hair, and a recognition that Ifemelu's more relaxed attitude to hairstyle is a reflection of her youthful hopes. Ifemelu, for her part, is still divided between warm memories of Lagos and the exciting corrupt dream of New York 'ice cream vans tinkling . . . things rotting.' Adichie's cultural symbol of the 'undrunk' yet 'opened' can of coke was commented upon only in more successful responses. Contextual discussion mostly centred on ideas about the American Dream and links to other texts about immigration which feature the hope for a better life.

## Question 10 (a)

- 10 (a) Henry Roth: *Call It Sleep*

'The literature of immigration explores the importance of a sense of community.'

By comparing *Call It Sleep* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. **[30]**

There were very few responses on this text, but those few candidates who wrote on it once again appeared to warm to David Schearl and appreciate the remarkable account of his young life, based on Henry Roth's own, as a very new immigrant to the East Side of New York. Work on this text, although scarce, usually represented the strongest submissions on this topic. Responses suggested that community is everything in this novel, although David and his mother find their connections and relationships damaged and compromised at every turn by Albert Schearl's paranoia, anger and violence. Comparisons with *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* focused on the striking lack of community life in the case of Changez, who is always presented as a solitary figure, struggling to make connections.

## Question 10 (b)

(b) Mohsin Hamid: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

'Immigration narratives often feature hostility on the part of immigrants towards their host nation.'

By comparing *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* with at least one other text prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view. [30]

Responses on the hostility of the immigrant towards the host nation generally focused on Changez' reaction to the events of 9/11; most candidates were able to quote substantially from this text and showed how his attitudes crystallise quite dramatically at this point. Most sought balance in the response by identifying a corresponding hostility towards Changez from New Yorkers. Novels chosen for comparison were dominated by *Small Island*, and more successful responses identified different voices in this novel and compared and contrasted their feelings and attitudes. Interesting and thoughtful responses also appeared on *The Namesake*, looking at the way feelings develop and change in different generations of immigrant families.

## Question 10 (c)

(c) 'The literature of immigration reflects the point of view of the outsider.'

By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you agree with this view.

In your answer **you must include** discussion of either *Call It Sleep* and/or *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. [30]

Responses on the outsider usually featured Changez once again and pointed out that he often seems to function as an observer and a commentator – indeed, the novel's form as a monologue imposes the role of commentator on him. Discussion often focused once again on 9/11 and on Changez' increasingly cross-grained behaviour in its aftermath, which proceeds hand-in-hand with increased suspicion and dislike towards him from the community. There was also analysis of the relationship between Changez and Erica, pointing out that he remains an outsider to Erica despite their attempts to achieve closeness. For the provision of comparison, *Small Island* and *The Namesake* both featured again, as did *Brick Lane* and *The Secret River*; these novels helped to open up debate about the extent to which immigrant characters are able to integrate into the communities they find.

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# Supporting you

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## Post-results services

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

## Keep up-to-date

We send a weekly roundup to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

## OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular CPD courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses on the relevant subject page on our [website](#) or visit [OCR professional development](#).

## Signed up for ExamBuilder?

**ExamBuilder** is the question builder platform for a range of our GCSE, A Level, Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals qualifications. [Find out more](#).

ExamBuilder is **free for all OCR centres** with an Interchange account and gives you unlimited users per centre. We need an [Interchange](#) username to validate the identity of your centre's first user account for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username, or nominate an existing Interchange user in your department.

## Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals.

It allows you to:

- review and run analysis reports on exam performance
- analyse results at question and/or topic level
- compare your centre with OCR national averages
- identify trends across the centre
- facilitate effective planning and delivery of courses
- identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle
- help pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of students and teaching departments.

[Find out more](#).

## Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on  
**01223 553998**

Alternatively, you can email us on  
**support@ocr.org.uk**

For more information visit

 **ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder**

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OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: N/A

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.