

Accredited

# A LEVEL

*Delivery Guide*

H472

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

Non Exam Assessment Guide –  
Component 03: Literature  
Post-1900

Version 2



**OCR**  
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

We will inform centres about any changes to the specification. We will also publish changes on our website. The latest version of our specification will always be the one on our website ([www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)) and this may differ from printed versions.

Copyright © 2015 OCR. All rights reserved.

#### Copyright

OCR retains the copyright on all its publications, including the specifications. However, registered centres for OCR are permitted to copy material from this specification booklet for their own internal use.

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered company number 3484466.

Registered office: 1 Hills Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2EU

OCR is an exempt charity.

This Non Exam Assessment Guidance is designed to accompany the OCR A Level GCE specification in English Literature for teaching from September 2015.

# CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Summary of Content</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Guidance</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Assessment Criteria <i>Literature Post-1900</i></b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5. Administration/Regulations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6. FAQs</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>7. Exemplars</b>	<b>23</b>



# INTRODUCTION

The OCR Specification is designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established in GCSE English, GCSE English Literature and in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Key Stages 3 and 4.

This Guidance is provided in addition to the Specification to support teachers in understanding the detail necessary to prepare candidates for the Non Exam Assessment Component 03: Literature Post-1900.

It is important to note that the Specification is the document on which assessment is based; it specifies the content and skills to be covered in delivering a course of study. At all times, therefore, this guidance booklet should be read in conjunction with the Specification. If clarification on a particular point is needed then reference should be in the first instance to the Specification.

OCR recognises that programmes of teaching and learning in preparation for this qualification will vary from centre to centre and from teacher to teacher. This Guidance is offered to support teachers and it is recognised that individual teachers may want to make modifications to the suggested materials and approaches.



# SUMMARY OF CONTENT

## Component 03: *Literature Post-1900*

The aim of this component is to encourage individual study and enjoyment of modern literature and for students to develop:

- an appreciation of how writers shape meanings in texts through use of language, imagery, form and structure
- an understanding of texts informed by an appreciation of different interpretations
- an ability to explore connections across texts, such as stylistic, thematic or contextual
- an understanding of the significance and influence of contexts in which texts were written and received.

### Literary text requirements

Candidates are required to study three literary texts. The three texts must include one prose text, one poetry text and one drama text:

- the texts must have been first published or performed in 1900 or later
- one literary text must have been first published or performed after 2000.

Centres and candidates must select texts in groupings that facilitate links or contrasts, in order to develop the ability to explore how texts illuminate and connect with each other. Texts should be selected on the basis of offering candidates a range of work of literary merit and significance.

**Note:** The texts chosen must not appear on any of the core set text lists for the externally-assessed units at A Level. Students may not study texts in translation for this component.



## Task requirements

Candidates are required to produce a folder of coursework of around 3000 words with **two** tasks.

### Task 1: Close reading OR re-creative writing with commentary

Candidates can select to do:

Either – a close, critical analysis of a section of their chosen text or poem. Candidates are recommended to select a small section of text, **three to four pages** of prose or drama or up to **45 lines** of poetry.

Candidates are required to include a copy of their chosen passage when they submit their folder.

**Or** – an item of re-creative writing based on a selected passage of their chosen text or of their chosen poem, with a commentary explaining the links between the candidate's own writing and the original passage selected.

Candidates are required to include a copy of their chosen passage or poem when they submit their folder.

**This task must be based on one literary text.**

### Task 2: Comparative Essay

Candidates submit an essay considering two texts exploring contrasts and comparisons between them, informed by different interpretations and an understanding of contexts.

What do we mean by 'different interpretations'?

- reference to recognised critics
- different theatrical interpretations of drama where candidates discuss different directors' presentations or different actors' portrayals
- exploring a text in relation to, for example, Aristotelian or other concepts of tragedy
- developing a theoretical approach to the study of their texts (feminism or Marxism, for example)
- different interpretations of texts produced through rewriting or television/film adaptations.

**This task must be based on two literary texts.**



## Grouping texts

The following pages give some suggestions for the grouping of texts for this unit.

We have provided some formulations for Task 1: Close Reading tasks, and Task 1: Recreative Writing tasks, to give further guidance and exemplification on good practice in setting both tasks for the Non Exam Assessment Folder. A number of tasks have been suggested for each group of texts. This is to encourage the practice in centres of providing a choice of tasks for students, to encourage independent study and personal responses. It also gives exemplification of different styles of task formulation for each of the tasks in the folder.

It is important to note that these are initial suggestions. Teachers can create groupings of texts to best suit their own teaching programmes and their learners' interests, provided that the selections meet the requirements of the Specification, and can use the suggested tasks as a basis or inspiration to devise their own tasks. Approval of whether groupings, texts and tasks are acceptable must be sought from OCR via the *Text(s)* and *Task(s)* *Proposal Form* in the Specification.

NOTE: there is no requirement to link Task 1 and Task 2 texts, but teachers may group all three texts if they wish in order to achieve a coherent course.

In the lists suggested on the following page, post 2000 texts are indicated by\*





# YOUNG WOMEN

*Ariel* Sylvia Plath 1965 Poetry

*The Glass Menagerie* Tennessee Williams 1944 Drama

*Purple Hibiscus* Chimamanda Adichie 2003 Prose\*

## Task 1

Discuss in detail Plath's response to the child in 'Morning Song' and say how far this poem is characteristic of Plath's style and concerns in *Ariel*.

Paying close attention to the dialogue and stage directions in the final section of *The Glass Menagerie* (from 'TOM: I'm going to the movies'), discuss Williams' dramatic methods and comment on the episode's effectiveness as the ending of the play.

Comment closely on the passage from the first section of *Purple Hibiscus* ('After Papa took communion... to... to change out of my red Sunday dress'), considering ways in which it establishes Kambili's family life at the beginning of the novel.

Write a soliloquy for either Amanda or Laura, to be placed at a particular point within *The Glass Menagerie*, drawing on Williams' characterisation of the character in the rest of the play. Add a commentary which explores how your speech is characteristic of Williams' style and concerns.

## Task 2

Compare ways in which Plath and Williams portray young women struggling with the pressures of other people's expectations of them in *Ariel* and *The Glass Menagerie*.

Compare how far and in what ways Plath and Adichie portray young women as resilient in *Ariel* and *Purple Hibiscus*.

'Parents are the problem.' By comparing ways in which Williams and Adichie present the relationship between children and their parents in *The Glass Menagerie* and *Purple Hibiscus*, say how far they confirm this view.

# YOUNG MEN

*The Blue Book* Owen Sheers 2000 Poetry\*

*Look Back in Anger* John Osborne 1956 Drama

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* James Joyce 1916 Prose

## Task 1

Discuss ways in which Sheers presents the speaker's view of his mother in 'Not Yet My Mother', considering how far it is characteristic of the exploration of family relationships in *The Blue Book*.

Write a detailed analysis of the action and dialogue in a section from Act 2 Scene 1 of *Look Back in Anger* (from 'HELENA: Alison, listen to me... to 'JIMMY: Tea?'), discussing ways in which this extract is characteristic of Osborne's style and concerns in the play.

Comment closely on the passage from Chapter 4 of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* ('The Reverend Stephen Dedalus, S. J.' to '... the experience of her children in every time'), discussing ways in which it is a significant moment in the development of Stephen's characterisation.

Write another section about Stephen's childhood, to be placed early in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Add a commentary in which you explain ways in which your writing draws on Joyce's style and concerns in this part of the novel.

## Task 2

Compare and contrast ways in which Sheers and Osborne present responses to social background in *The Blue Book* and *Look Back in Anger*.

'Growing up, these texts confirm, is hard to do.' By comparing the treatment of growing up in *The Blue Book* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, say how far and in what ways these texts lead you to agree with this view.

Compare ways in which Osborne and Joyce present the protagonists of *Look Back in Anger* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as characters eager to assert their own identity.





## TIME

*Poems of 1912-13* Thomas Hardy 1913 Poetry

*Arcadia* Tom Stoppard 1993 Drama

*Atonement* Ian McEwan 2001 Prose\*

### Task 1

Write a close critical analysis of 'At Castle Boterel', considering how far and in what ways this poem is characteristic of Hardy's *Poems of 1912-13*.

Comment closely on Stoppard's dramatic methods towards the end of *Arcadia* (from 'Septimus pours himself some more wine' to the end of the play), considering how effective it is as a conclusion to the play.

Discuss in detail the effects of the writing in the passage from Part One Chapter 11 of *Atonement* ('At last they were strangers...' to 'It was over.'), considering its significance in the novel.

After reading *Poems of 1912-13*, write a poem in the style of Hardy. Add a commentary which shows how your choices of subject matter, language, imagery and form are appropriate, with reference to Hardy's own poems.

### Task 2

'What is in the past is also always in the present.' By comparing Hardy's and Stoppard's treatment of time in *Poems of 1912-13* and *Arcadia*, say how far these texts support this view.

Compare ways in which Hardy and McEwan explore love and fidelity in *Poems of 1912-13* and *Atonement*.

Compare ways in which Stoppard and McEwan experiment with form to explore the effects of time in *Arcadia* and *Atonement*.

## THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

*District and Circle* Seamus Heaney 2006 Poetry\*

*Jerusalem* Jez Butterworth 2009 Drama\*

*Saturday* Ian McEwan 2005 Prose

### Task 1

Comment closely on the writing and effects of 'The Nod' from *District and Circle*, saying how far it is typical of ways in which Heaney suggests an undercurrent of violence in ordinary activities.

Discuss in detail Butterworth's dramatic methods at the beginning of Act Two of *Jerusalem*, from 'JOHNNY comes out in his helmet...' to 'So here's your blessing', saying how far his characterisation of Johnny here is characteristic of the play as a whole.

Discuss in detail the passage about the squash game in Chapter 2 from *Saturday*, ('OK' He says to Perowne...' to 'One of our best.'), considering ways in which it contributes to the characterisation of Henry Perowne in the novel.

Write another short section involving Perowne, to be placed into *Saturday* at a particular point, imitating McEwan's concerns and style in the novel. Add a commentary which shows how your choices are appropriate as a recreation of McEwan's writing.

### Task 2

Compare ways in which Heaney and Butterworth use landscape and place in *District and Circle* and *Jerusalem* to explore broader concerns.

'Post 9/11, much literature betrays a consciousness of the hidden possibilities of disaster.' By comparing Heaney's poetry in *District and Circle* with the presentation of Perowne's preoccupations in *Saturday*, say how far you find this view to be borne out.

Compare ways in which Butterworth and McEwan express dissatisfaction with aspects of contemporary Britain in *Jerusalem* and *Saturday*.



## YOUTH IN TIME

*Book of Matches* Simon Armitage 1993 Poetry

*The History Boys* Alan Bennett 2004 Drama\*

*Waterland* Graham Swift 1983 Prose

### Task 1

Choose any one of the poems in the *Book of Matches* sequence. Write a detailed appreciation of the poem you have chosen, relating it to Armitage's concerns and style in the sequence as a whole.

Discuss in detail the first scene in Act Two of *The History Boys* (from 'Irwin is about five years older' to 'It is BBC2'), considering ways in which this extract contributes to Irwin's characterisation in the play.

Comment closely on the writing of the passage at the beginning of Chapter 14 of *Waterland* (to '– yearned, too, to go back –'), considering ways in which it demonstrates the style and concerns of the novel as a whole.

Write another short lesson scene for *The History Boys*, involving either Hector or Irwin and the class. Add a commentary which shows how you have drawn your ideas for the scene from an understanding of Bennett's style and concerns in the play.

### Task 2

'In looking back, we see anew.' By comparing ways in which *Book of Matches* and *The History Boys* look back and re-evaluate, consider what insights Armitage and Bennett explore.

Compare ways in which Armitage and Swift present a developing sense of identity in *Book of Matches* and *Waterland*.

Compare and contrast ways in which Bennett and Swift explore the relationships between teachers and young people in *The History Boys* and *Waterland*.

## DISILLUSION IN AMERICA

*Selected Poems* EE Cummings 1958 Poetry

*Death of a Salesman* Arthur Miller 1949 Drama

*Netherland* Joseph O'Neill 2008 Prose\*

### Task 1

Write a detailed critical appreciation of 'a salesman is an it that stinks Excuse', saying how far and in what ways you find this poem characteristic of EE Cummings's *Selected Poems*.

Comment closely on the passage from Act One of *Death of a Salesman* (from 'LINDA: Did you sell anything?' to 'WILLY: ... a business for the boys!'), considering how far it is characteristic of the presentation of the relationship between Willy and Linda in the play as a whole.

Discuss in detail O'Neill's presentation of Hans' perceptions on New York on pp. 116-119 of *Netherland* ('I've heard that social scientists...' to 'He cried out with laughter!'), considering how it is characteristic of the presentation of the city in the novel.

Write one or two poems imitating the style and concerns of Cummings's poetry in his *Selected Poems*. Add a commentary which evaluates how far and in what ways your writing is characteristic of Cummings' poetry.

### Task 2

Compare ways in which Cummings and Miller explore the changing values of American society in *Selected Poems* and *Death of a Salesman*.

Compare ways in which Cummings and O'Neill explore the personal within a broader social context.

Compare ways in which Miller and O'Neill portray Willy and Hans as protagonists, considering how far and in what ways they reflect society around them.



# WAR THROUGH TIME

*Selected Poems* Wilfred Owen 1920 Poetry

*Agamemnon* Steven Berkoff 1977 Drama

*Half of a Yellow Sun* Chimamanda Adichie 2006 Prose\*

## Task 1

Comment closely on the writing and effects of 'Dulce et Decorum Est', saying how far Owen's presentation of war here is characteristic of his *Selected Poems*.

Write a detailed critical appreciation of the Herald's speech from *Agamemnon* ('On this good soil of Argos...' to '...my speech is done.'), discussing how far it is characteristic of Berkoff's blending of ancient and modern in the play.

Discuss in detail Adichie's presentation of the attack on the airport in *Half of a Yellow Sun* (Chapter 12 up to '...he stood aside, vomiting'), considering how far it is characteristic of the presentation of violence in the novel.

Write another Chorus speech to be inserted at a specific point in *Agamemnon*. Add a commentary which explains your positioning of the speech and ways in which you have imitated Berkoff's style and concerns in the play.

## Task 2

Compare ways in which Owen and Berkoff, in *Selected Poems* and *Agamemnon*, present the suffering of those left at home in times of war.

Compare and contrast some of the ways in which Owen and Adichie present the horrors of very different wars.

Compare ways in which Berkoff and Adichie present relationships placed under stress by warfare.



# ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Candidates are required to submit a coursework folder of around 3000 words. There are two tasks:

## Task 1: Close reading OR re-creative with commentary (15 marks)

### Close reading

Candidates are required to write a close critical analysis of a section of their chosen text.

### Re-creative writing with commentary

Candidates are required to produce an item of re-creative writing based on a selected passage or poem from their chosen text with a commentary exploring the links between their own writing and the original passage selected.

Candidates are assessed on:

AO1: articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

AO2: analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

### Assessment

#### Step 1: Determine the level

1. Match evidence of achievement against the descriptors for the assessment grid.
2. Use the best fit method, balancing strengths against limitations, to establish the appropriate level.

*Note that assessments refer to levels and do not correlate to grades.*

#### Step 2: Determine the mark

To determine the mark within the level, consider the following:

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

The final mark will reflect the balance of achievement and will take into account the dominant assessment objective. The relative weighting of the assessment objectives can be represented as:

Literature post-1900	AO1	AO2
Task 1	33%	67%



**Task 1: Close reading**

In Task 1 the dominant assessment objective is A02. The weightings for the Assessment Objectives in this ask are:

A02 – 67%

A01 – 33%

An answer does not have to meet all the requirements of a level descriptor before being placed in that level. The extent to which it meets all of the requirements of a level descriptor will determine its placement within that level. The extent to which the statements within the level have been achieved should be the only criteria used when deciding the mark within a level. Candidate work which fully meets all criteria for a level should be awarded the top mark in the level.

<b>Level 6</b> <b>13–15</b> <b>marks</b>	<b>AO2 (67%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-developed and consistently detailed discussion of ways in which language, form and structure in selected passage shape meanings.</li> <li>Consistently focused and precise use of analytical methods.</li> <li>Consistently effective use of quotations and references, critically addressed, blended into discussion.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO1 (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent understanding of selected passage and its place in the wider text.</li> <li>Consistently fluent and accurate writing in appropriate register.</li> <li>Critical concepts and terminology used accurately and consistently.</li> <li>Well-structured, coherent argument consistently developed.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 5</b> <b>10–12</b> <b>marks</b>	<b>AO2 (67%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed and detailed discussion of ways in which language, form and structure in selected passage shape meanings with good level of detail.</li> <li>Very good use of analytical methods.</li> <li>Very good use of quotations and references, usually critically addressed, well integrated.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO1 (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very good and secure understanding of selected passage and its place in the wider text.</li> <li>Very good level of coherence and accuracy in writing, in appropriate register.</li> <li>Critical concepts and terminology used accurately.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b> <b>7–9</b> <b>marks</b>	<b>AO2 (67%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competently developed discussion of ways in which language, form and structure in selected passage shape meanings.</li> <li>Competent use of analytical methods.</li> <li>Competent use of illustrative quotations and references, sometimes critically addressed, often integrated.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO1 (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competent understanding of selected passage and its place in the wider text.</li> <li>Clear writing in generally appropriate register.</li> <li>Critical concepts and terminology used appropriately.</li> <li>Straightforward argument competently structured and developed.</li> </ul>



<b>Level 3</b> 4–6 marks	<b>AO2 (67%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straightforward discussion of ways in which language, form and structure in selected passage shape meanings.</li> <li>• Some attempt to use analytical methods.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO1 (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straightforward understanding of selected passage and its place in the wider text.</li> <li>• Mostly clear writing, perhaps with inconsistencies in register.</li> <li>• Some appropriate use of critical concepts and terminology.</li> <li>• Straightforward argument evident, lacking development.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b> 2–3 marks	<b>AO2 (67%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited discussion of ways in which language, form and structure in selected passage shape meanings.</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use analytical methods.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO1 (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited understanding of selected passage and its place in the wider text.</li> <li>• Limited clear writing, some inconsistencies in register.</li> <li>• Limited use of critical concepts and terminology.</li> <li>• Limited structured argument evident, lacking development.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 1</b> 1 mark	<b>AO2 (67%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no relevant discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings.</li> <li>• Commentary with little or no use of analytical methods.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO1 (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no relevant understanding of selected passage and its place in the wider text.</li> <li>• Inconsistent writing with persistent serious technical errors, very little or no use of appropriate register.</li> <li>• Persistently inaccurate or no use of critical concepts and terminology.</li> </ul>
<b>0 marks</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response or no response worthy of credit.</li> </ul>



# HELPING YOU BRING ENGLISH TO LIFE

## Task 2: Comparative Essay (25 marks)

Candidates are required to produce an essay exploring connections and comparisons across texts.

Candidates are assessed on:

- AO1:** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression
- AO2:** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts
- AO3:** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received
- AO4:** Explore connections across literary texts
- AO5:** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

## Assessment

### Step 1: Determine the band

1. Match evidence of achievement against the descriptors for the assessment grid.
2. Use the best fit method, balancing strengths against limitations, to establish the appropriate level.

*Note that assessments refer to levels and do not correlate to grades.*

### Step 2: Determine the mark

To determine the mark within the level, consider the following:

Descriptor	Award mark
on the borderline of this level and the one below	at bottom of level
just enough achievement on balance for this level	above bottom and below middle of level
meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	above middle and below top of level
consistently meets the criteria for this level	at top of level





## Task 2: Comparative Essay

In **Task 2** all five assessment objectives are equally weighted. The weightings for the Assessment Objectives in this task are:

A01 20% A02 20% A03 20% A04 20% A05 20%

An answer does not have to meet all the requirements of a level descriptor before being placed in that level. The extent to which it meets all of the requirements of a level descriptor will determine its placement within that level. The extent to which the statements within the level have been achieved should be the only criteria used when deciding the mark within a level. Candidate work which fully meets all criteria for a level should be awarded the top mark in the level.

<b>Level 6</b> 22–25 marks	<b>AO1 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent and consistently detailed understanding of two texts and task undertaken.</li> <li>• Consistently fluent and accurate writing in appropriate register.</li> <li>• Critical concepts and terminology used accurately and confidently.</li> <li>• Well-structured, coherent argument, consistently developed.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO2 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently coherent discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings, contributing to development of argument.</li> <li>• Consistently focused and precise use of analytical methods.</li> <li>• Consistently effective use of quotations and references, blended into discussion.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO3 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently well-developed and detailed understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received, as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO4 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent and consistently detailed purposeful exploration of connections between texts.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO5 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent and consistently detailed exploration of different readings or ways of reading the texts.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 5</b> 18–21 marks	<b>AO1 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good understanding of two texts and task undertaken.</li> <li>• Very good level of coherence and accuracy in writing, in appropriate register.</li> <li>• Critical concepts and terminology used accurately.</li> <li>• Well-structured argument, with clear line of development.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO2 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings, contributing to argument.</li> <li>• Effective use of analytical methods.</li> <li>• Effective use of quotations and references, usually well integrated.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO3 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good, clear evaluation of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received, as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO4 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good, clear purposeful exploration of connections between texts.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO5 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good exploration of different readings or ways of reading the texts.</li> </ul>



<b>Level 4</b> 13–17 marks	<b>AO1 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent understanding of two texts and task undertaken</li> <li>• Clear writing in generally appropriate register</li> <li>• Critical concepts and terminology used appropriately</li> <li>• Straightforward argument, competently structured and developed.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO2 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings</li> <li>• Competent use of analytical methods</li> <li>• Competent use of illustrative quotations and references, often integrated.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO3 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received, as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO4 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent discussion of connections between texts.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO5 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent discussion of different readings or ways of reading the texts.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b> 9–12 marks	<b>AO1 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straightforward understanding of two texts and task undertaken.</li> <li>• Mostly clear writing, perhaps with inconsistencies in register.</li> <li>• Some appropriate use of critical concepts and terminology.</li> <li>• Straightforward argument evident, lacking development.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO2 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straightforward discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings.</li> <li>• Some attempt to use analytical methods.</li> <li>• Some use of quotations and references as illustration.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO3 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received, as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO4 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some attempt to develop discussion of connections between texts.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO5 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some awareness of different readings or ways of reading the texts.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b> 5–8 marks	<b>AO1 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited understanding of texts and main elements of task undertaken.</li> <li>• Limited clear writing, some inconsistencies in register.</li> <li>• Limited use of critical concepts and terminology.</li> <li>• Limited structured argument, lacking development.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO2 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings.</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use analytical methods.</li> <li>• Limited use of quotations and references as illustration.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO3 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received, as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO4 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited attempt to develop discussion of connections between texts.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO5 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness of different readings or ways of reading the texts.</li> </ul>



Level 1 1–4 marks	<b>AO1 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no relevant understanding of texts and little relevant attempt at task undertaken.</li> <li>• Inconsistent writing with persistent serious technical errors, very little or no use of appropriate register.</li> <li>• Persistently inaccurate or no use of critical concepts and terminology.</li> <li>• Undeveloped, fragmentary discussion.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO2 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no relevant discussion of ways in which language, form and structure shape meanings.</li> <li>• Commentary with little or no use of analytical methods.</li> <li>• Few quotations (e.g. one or two) or no quotations used.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO3 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little reference to (possibly irrelevant) or no understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received, as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO4 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no discussion of connections between texts.</li> </ul>
	<b>AO5 (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no relevant awareness of different readings or ways of reading the texts.</li> </ul>
0 marks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response or no response worthy of credit.</li> </ul>

Note: The marking of all tasks should be on a 'best fit' principle, bearing in mind the weighting of the assessment objectives.



# ADMINISTRATION/ REGULATIONS

## Authentication of learners' work

Learners and centres must declare that the work is the learner's own.

Teachers must declare that the work submitted for internal assessment is the learner's own work by submitting a centre authentication form (CCS160) for each internally assessed component. This should be sent to the moderator at the same time as the marks.

## Approval of text(s) and task(s)

Approval of non exam assessment texts and task titles is mandatory and centres must submit the chosen texts and task titles to OCR for approval *using the Text(s) and Task(s) proposal form*.

This must be done every series even where the same texts and/or tasks have been approved previously. Centres should wait for approval before learners begin working on their non exam assessment.

## Internal standardisation

Centres must carry out internal standardisation to ensure that marks awarded by different teachers are accurate and consistent across all learners entered for the component from that centre.

## Moderation

The purpose of moderation is to bring the marking of internally assessed components in all participating centres to an agreed standard. This is achieved by checking a sample of each centre's marking of learners' work.

Following internal standardisation, centres submit marks to OCR and the moderator. If there are fewer than 10 learners, all the work should be submitted for moderation at the same time as marks are submitted.

Once marks have been submitted to OCR and your moderator, centres will receive a moderation sample request. Samples will include work from across the range of attainment of the learners' work.

The moderation for A Level English Literature will be postal moderation.

Centres will receive the outcome of moderation when the provisional results are issued. This will include:

**Moderation Adjustments Report** – Listing any scaling that has been applied to internally assessed components.

**Moderator Report to Centres** – A brief report by the moderator on the internal assessment of learners' work.

## Carrying forward non exam assessment

Learners who are retaking the qualification can choose either to retake the non exam assessment or to carry forward their mark for that component from the previous exam series. If a learner decides to carry forward their mark, they must be entered in the retake series using the entry code for the carry forward option H472C.

- Learners must decide at the point of entry whether they are going to carry forward the non exam assessment, or if they are going to retake it to count towards their result. It is not possible for a learner to retake the non exam assessment and then choose whether the retake result or a carried forward result is used for certification.
- Learners can only carry forward from one year into the following year. Where the gap between the initial qualification and the retake is more than one year, carry forward is not permitted.
- A result for a non exam assessment component can only be carried forward once.



### Submission of marks to OCR

Centres must have made an entry for the component in order for OCR to make the appropriate moderator arrangements. Centres must also submit all texts and tasks to OCR for approval by 31st January in the year of submission.

Marks may be submitted to OCR either by EDI or on mark sheets (MS1).

Deadline for the receipt of marks is: **15 May**

Teachers and Examinations Officers must also be familiar with the general regulations on coursework; these can be found in the OCR Administration Guide on the OCR website ([www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)).

### Standardisation and Moderation

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that standards are aligned within and across all centres, and that each teacher has applied the standards consistently across the range of candidates within the centre.

- All folders are assessed by the teacher
- If work in a centre is assessed by more than one teacher, marks must be internally standardised before submission so that there is a consistent standard and appropriate rank order across all teaching groups in the centre.
- Marks must be submitted to OCR by the agreed date, after which postal moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures.

The sample of work which is submitted for moderation must show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the assessment criteria.



**Non Exam Assessment word length**

- The suggested length of work in a folder is 3000 words.
- \* A learner will not be specifically penalised for exceeding the suggested word length, however any response that significantly differs from this word count is likely to be self-penalising either by not demonstrating the AOs to the required level, or through lacking coherence and concision.

**Quotations**

If quotations from secondary sources are used, they must be acknowledged by use of footnotes (quotations and footnotes do not form part of the word count).

**Bibliography**

All work must be accompanied by a complete bibliography. This must include, for books and periodicals, page numbers, publishers and dates, and for newspaper or magazine articles, titles, dates and sources (where known). Video and audio resources used must also be stated. For material taken from Internet sources, the full address is required. So that teachers can authenticate candidates' work with confidence, teachers are required to obtain a copy of all Internet materials used. If, for any reason, a candidate has used no additional resource material, a statement to this effect must be included. (The bibliography does not form part of the word count.)



# FAQs

## **Do task titles for the coursework have to be sent to OCR for approval?**

Yes they do. Please use the interactive 'Text(s) and Task(s) Approval form' at the back of the specification.

## **Can teachers select the non exam assessment texts for the candidates, rather than allowing candidates a free choice?**

Yes, they can. OCR recognises that programmes of teaching and learning in preparation for this qualification will vary from centre to centre and from teacher to teacher. It is therefore just as acceptable for teachers to nominate the coursework texts as it is for candidates to select the texts themselves. However, since the component is designed as an individual research task producing extended individual study, Centres are very much encouraged to allow candidates some choice. All potential text and task combinations must be submitted to OCR for approval, year on year.

## **Can teachers/candidates use texts that are not listed in the Literature post-1900 Guidance document?**

Yes, they can. The groupings of texts in the Guidance document are suggestions only. Candidates and teachers can create groupings of texts that best suit their own programmes of study and interests, provided that the selections meet the requirements of the specification and are approved by OCR.

## **What is the word limit for this component?**

3,000 of the candidate's own words.

## **If a group of candidates is studying the same texts, can they be given the same task title for their coursework?**

In theory yes, but this can often lead to work with little variance which lacks individual engagement. It is therefore beneficial at least to give candidates a selection of tasks to choose from, as this will enable them to focus on aspects of the texts which interest them.

## **If candidates are using a poetry collection as one of their texts for task 2, how many poems do they need to refer to?**

As poems vary in both length and content, there can be no definitive guide to how many should be studied. The text studied should be the approximate equivalent to a poetry selection set for an examined component, and the essay should show an understanding of that text. In practice, this means that candidates should aim for some detailed discussion of four or

five poems, with some reference to others where they fit the developing argument. Where the text includes a long poem, such as *The Waste Land*, detailed reference to this poem will serve instead of four or five shorter poems, but there should still be some reference to others in the collection.

## **What defines a text 'of sufficient substance'?**

One of the advantages of non exam assessment is that candidates and teachers can choose texts according to particular interests or abilities. This means that a very wide range of texts are chosen and used successfully. However, teachers need to think carefully when guiding candidates to ensure that the chosen texts allow them to address the Assessment Objectives at an appropriate level.





# TASK 1: EXEMPLAR RESPONSES WITH EXAMINER COMMENTARY

## Exemplar 1

### Task 1: Close Reading

Text: *Translations* by Brian Friel

**Discuss in detail Friel's dramatic methods in Act Two Scene Two, pages 61-66, showing how it develops his concerns and demonstrates his techniques in *Translations*.**

The beginning of Act Two, Scene Two is the most emotionally significant scene of *Translations*, because of the poignant stage movements, the language and the issues addressed. Sympathy and affection is created for Yolland, making his approaching disappearance more effective, and allows the audience to feel an emotional connection with the politics in the play.

One of the key concerns dealt with in this scene is the importance of a name. After the uncommunicative, embarrassed awkwardness Friel creates at the beginning of the scene, the names of George and Maire are the first words which allow the characters to communicate, and for moments they repeat their names, ending with 'George and Maire'. Their names are bound together, and signify their emotional connection; it's the knowledge of each other's names which connects them. The distress of George when Maire refers to him as 'Lieutenant George' conveys how important a name is to a person's identity – 'I never think of myself as Lieutenant'. This concern of personal identity is addressed only moments before, as Owen *'explodes'* with *'My name is not Roland!'* The italics here show the immense passion behind his correction expressed to the audience, despite his apparent indifference to the names of the towns. The audience also understand the importance of Maire's name – 'Of course I know you're Maire' expresses the significance Yolland holds in being able to identify the woman he's been watching 'night and day'. He's recently discovered the meaning behind 'Chatach' – curly haired – and later in the scene, he calls her 'curly haired Maire', which shows that not only does Chatach signify and identify something about Maire, but it is also used as an endearment by Yolland. It therefore seems that, as Yolland confirms, every name is in 'perfect congruence with its roots', and makes the audience reconsider how easily Owen changes the place names, and think about their significance.

Another issue addressed in this scene is how much it will take for Yolland to fit in; is it enough to speak Irish, or is Yolland right when he says 'I would always be and outsider here'? In this scene, it appears that language is no barrier to emotions, and Friel uses 'that leap over the ditch' at the start of the scene to symbolise this overcoming of the barrier. Yolland and Marie have the same thoughts: Maire observes 'The grass must be wet. My feet are soaking: only seconds before Yolland observes 'Your feet must be wet. The grass is soaking'; they both use the exact same phrase – 'Say anything at all. I love the sound of your speech'. There are even moments when the audience can forget that they aren't actually conversing – they talk fluently as though in real conversation, which allows the audience to experience what Yolland feels: it does not matter that they don't speak the same language, they still 'understand what [each other] are saying', which implies that Yolland is just the same as Maire, so would fit in in her home. Nevertheless, there are distinct moments in this scene which fundamentally separate Yolland from Maire, which could represent the relationship between England and Ireland. Their initial inability to communicate expresses this, both giving up because of *'the futility of it'* and ending in a defeated 'O my God'. Similarly, whilst Yolland and Owen speak perfect English to each other, they do not always truly communicate – Yolland does not even know Owen's real name until well into the play and their relationship. Visually, there are moments when their *'misunderstanding'* causes them to separate as Maire *'moves slowly across the stage'*, creating a physical division between them. Furthermore, even though a director would probably choose to remove Yolland's bright scarlet regimental jacket by this stage in the play, if he was still wearing it, this would create a colour divide between Yolland's vivid jacket and Maire's earthy, subtle clothing. This causes the audience to question the validity of their relationship – if they feel it, is it real if they cannot express it words? Similarly, even if Hugh knows the way through the country's landscape to the priest's house, he no longer knows the names of places so cannot express this in words either. Friel brings the issue of cultural boundaries to the forefront of the audience's mind and makes them consider how important a language is to a community.

The words which Yolland and Maire communicate with in this scene hold great significance. The words which Maire knows – 'water', 'fire', 'earth' – are three of the four elements. Being the necessity to life, it can be asked whether, if Maire knows these fundamental elements, she needs to know any more? The names of the places in Ireland are also the only words which allow Yolland and Maire to become intimate, so a whole new level of meaning is added to them. Even if names like 'Tobair Vree' or 'Druim Dubh' no longer hold a direct connection with their roots, they connect people: two in love, or an entire society, which is so poignantly displayed here by Friel's stage directions – they now *'begin moving – almost imperceptibly – towards each other'*. An intimate, touching and romantic ambiance is created which visually expresses the connection shared between them. Even the sounds they make, which get shorter and shorter, from 'Pol na gCaorach' to the one syllable word 'Lag', intensify their closeness, until they finally touch.



The emotional connection established with Yolland in this scene allows Friel to intensify the loss felt when Yolland disappears, and adds depth to the relationship between the colonising British and the colonised Ireland. Throughout the play, the audience experiences the British acting ignorantly towards the Irish – Lancey *'speaks as if he were addressing children'*; an unjustified judgement of the Irish. However, by creating this emotional connection with Yolland, Friel forces the audience to judge the Irish's reaction to them, as the Donnelly twins apparently abduct him. The romantic and caring nature of Yolland showed through the scene's proxemics and the tender language creates empathy in the audience, so the loss and distress that Maire feels when Yolland then disappears is shared.

To conclude, Act Two, Scene Two is significant in the structure of the play because of its careful and intricately placed movements and its tenderness. This makes all the concerns which Friel addresses – the importance of language, a country's culture, colonisation, amongst other things – grip the audience. Friel specifically does not make any conclusions about these subjects, but instead encourages the audience to consider them, especially after this scene.

1087 words

### **Moderation Comments**

The opening of the essay gives a clear account of the context of the chosen scene within the play and suggests its significance.

There is a well-developed initial focus on names. The action of the scene is clearly discussed with detailed textual support and close focus on the effects with examination of the stage directions. The essay explores the significance of names in the selected scene with reference to earlier parts of the play.

Paragraphs are clearly signposted to direct the argument. Questions raised elsewhere in play are explored in this scene, which leads to consideration of the symbolic significance of the stage actions and the parallels in the dialogue, both carefully analysed. There is a developed sense of the dramatic genre and an audience response, seen also in the suggestions about staging and costume. Questions are explored from different angles, considering alternatives, showing an excellent understanding of the scene and the whole text. Discussion of the tone of stage actions and dialogue is well integrated into the argument. The argument also refers to different parts of the play to develop the ideas, seen in the comments on Yolland and Owen, and Hugh's directions, furthering the understanding of the scene's pace within the play as a whole.

There is further exploration of the concerns of the play, linked with specific and detailed observations about the language of the dialogue in the chosen scene, with dynamics of dialogue and movement analysed and explored.

The penultimate paragraph considers the impact of the scene within the play by considering later events. The conclusion shapes the essay effectively. It does more than repeat; it makes overall comments on Field's methods and their effectiveness. **(LEVEL 6)**



## Exemplar 2

### Task 1: Close Reading

Text: *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro

**With close reference to language, form and structure, write a critical analysis of pages 79-82, and consider how the themes of this passage are explored elsewhere in the novel.**

*Never Let Me Go* is a dystopian novel, which explores an alternate world in the 1990s, where the science of cloning has advanced dramatically, so humans are now clones solely to provide organs for the rest of society. The prominent theme in this passage is the idea of the clones representing the literary 'Other' and this passage serves to enhance their isolation from the rest of society. This theme is also prominent throughout the novel, therefore increasing sympathy for the clones; however its relevance is especially strong in this passage.

A significant feature of this passage is the blunt tone of Miss Lucy's speech which contrasts greatly to the tone used by Kathy throughout *Never Let Me Go*. The repetition of the lexical choice 'none' gives Miss Lucy a forceful and blunt tone while telling the clones that their only 'purpose' in life is to 'donate' their vital organs. The verb 'donate' has connotations of selflessness and as their only purpose in life is to donate, then it shows that they themselves have no purpose, so Miss Lucy's language functionalises the clones. This bleak message is enhanced by the pathetic fallacy of the 'downpour' of rain, creating a very lugubrious atmosphere. Miss Lucy attempts to destroy any sense of hope as she believes it is better for them to know their destiny explicitly rather than dreaming of futures they can never live. The explicit nature of her speech contrasts significantly to the vague tone throughout the novel which is used to convey the deceptive society the clones live in, where nothing is made clear to the clones. However, Miss Lucy's speech fails to destroy the clones' hope and their response to the speech is another horrifying example of the clones' acceptance of their fate which is prominent throughout the novel. Kathy tells us how 'little discussion' followed Miss Lucy's speech and there was an attitude of 'so what?' towards it. This rhetorical question effectively conveys the clones' sense of acceptance as it makes the reader ask themselves how they would react to this news, and how it would contrast greatly to the clones' reaction. As Miss Lucy says, they have been 'told but not told', conveying how the students have been nurtured to accept their fate and even reinforce it. This is evident throughout the novel; for example after Ruth and Kathy fell out at the cottages, Kathy decided she 'wanted' to start being a carer. The verb 'wanted' portrays Kathy's desire to actually start the carer process, which in turn leads to her death, therefore her actions display how the clones have been conditioned welcome their fate.

The most prominent theme in this passage is the clones representing the literary 'Other' in society, portrayed through Miss Lucy's speech. Miss Lucy tells the clones how they're 'not like the actors' and 'not even like me'. The adjective 'even' enhances the isolation of the clones as it conveys how they share no similarities to the Guardians, who are the closest they have to parental figures. The label of 'Guardian' has connotations of protection and also links to a parental guardian, highlighting how the clones should be close to them, therefore by Miss Lucy denying any likeness between them, it reinforces their otherness in society. The theme of the clones as the 'Other' is also linked to sexual desire in this passage. Miss Lucy makes it explicitly clear to the clones that it was 'impossible' for any of them to have children, isolating them from the outside world where many people value having a child above all else. Despite this inability to have children being horrific to the reader and the 'normal' people in the novel, shown through Madame's tears when she believes Kathy is imagining holding a child, it doesn't appear to concern the clones. Kathy portrays how they weren't 'bothered' by it in chapter 6 and this casual response to such a horrific realisation suggests they have an inability to love and lack a sense of family. This inability to love leads us to view the clones as inhumane and poses the question of whether their inability to love is what truly separates them from humanity and isolates them as the 'Other?' The Otherness of the clones shown throughout this passage is also prominent throughout *Never Let Me Go* but best highlighted in the striking scene with Madame where they surround her and she 'froze'. Kathy tells us how this made her feel like a 'spider'; this noun creates vivid imagery in the readers mind of a horrific scuttling spider to vividly portray how Madame has a phobic fear towards the clones as they are so alien from society like a spider is viewed in our society.

Kathy's role as the unreliable narrator is evident in this passage, especially when considering the reaction to Miss Lucy's speech. Kathy uses phrases such as 'pretty sure' and 'my guess' which convey a tone of uncertainty when she recalls the event from her past, making the reader doubt the accuracy and reliability of her narration. The unreliability of her narration, clearly present in this passage, is present throughout the novel. It is evident at the start of the novel when Kathy introduces terms such as 'donors' and 'carers' before explaining what the concepts mean. This portrays how Kathy assumes we are part of her world and understand her jargon; this reinforces Kathy's seclusion from the rest of society as she clearly knows nothing else but her world. This may often alienate the reader however it also makes the reader feel sympathy towards Kathy as her ignorance conveys how all she's ever known is this miserable existence where her function is to donate and die. An example of Kathy's



unreliability as a narrator elsewhere in *Never Let Me Go* is shown when she says 'it wasn't until a long time afterwards... that I realised,' when referring to her argument with Ruth at the cottages. This is an example of teleological retrospect, which is explaining events with knowledge learnt after the event occurred, this makes her recall unreliable as it doesn't portray the opinions present at the time of the event and the event could have changed after she'd added in her retrospect. The use of the unreliable narrator in this novel is used to make the reader question Kathy's self-deception, another key theme in the novel; the deceiving nature is similar the way the clones deceive themselves that there is always hope for a sustained future.

1112 words

#### **Moderation Comments**

The opening of the essay establishes the context of the passage, considering the central concerns of the whole text. It goes on to develop a competent account of the chosen section, although several errors of grammar and expression affect the fluency and cogency of the argument. There is a greater balance in the essay towards the ideas and concerns rather than Ishiguro's writing in the passage, thus leaning more towards AO1 than the dominant AO2. There are considerations of the implications of some of the specific vocabulary, like 'donate', and pathetic fallacy which are closely linked to the clear account of the passage. Links to other episodes from the novel demonstrate an awareness of central issues in the whole text.

The concerns of 'otherness', procreation and love are explored well, although without a great deal of sustained focus on the language of the passage, apart from 'even,' 'Guardian' and the image of the 'spider'.

The final paragraph focuses appropriately on narrative, with a competently developed consideration of the use of an unreliable narrator in Kathy and some of the ways in which this works in the novel. The ideas are explored competently; although terms such as 'teleological retrospect' are used, the terminology is more advanced than the argument.

The essay gives a clear account of the concerns of novel exemplified in the selected passage, though not a sustained detailed consideration of the writing. **(LEVEL 4)**



## Exemplar 3

### Task 1: Close Reading

Text: *Selected Poems* by Wilfred Owen

**Write a detailed critical appreciation of 'Exposure', exploring ways in which this poem is typical of Wilfred Owen's war poetry.**

Wilfred Owen wrote 'Exposure' in 1917, whilst fighting in the trenches of World War One. He used this poem to portray the idea that the British soldiers were not only fighting the German opposition, but struggling against the bitter weather. As well as battling with the elements, the men were exposed to their own challenging thoughts. Owen shows the contrast between the reality the soldiers were having to face and their thoughts of home.

The rhyme scheme of the poem has a very repetitive structure – ABBAC – which could be employed to reflect the repetition of the men's lives whilst in the trenches. In a similar way, Owen includes a refrain of 'But nothing happens' at the end of most of the stanzas. This again shows the repetition and waiting around that the men had to endure.

In the first stanza, ellipses are used at the end of the first and second lines. As the poet is describing the 'silent' night with bitter cold weather, perhaps the ellipses are used as an unspoken syllable to reflect the silence. The sentence matches the context of the poem; it allows the reader to slow down, stop or drift into their own thoughts – just as the soldiers often did.

Owen also uses sibilance to recreate the sounds of whispering gusts of wind. For example, '...in the merciless iced east winds that knife us...'. The repetition of 'S' sounds is an auditory effect which helps the readers imagine they can also hear this angry hissing of the weather. This was a technique that Owen used a lot. It shows that the poem was created to be read aloud: Owen wanted the audience to reflect on the emotions and senses of his fellow soldiers.

In the poem, there are many contrasts shown between when the men are facing the reality of the trenches and when they are reflecting on their lives back at home.

The lack of colour sets a dull atmosphere from the beginning. He uses monochrome shades such as black and grey to show us how bleak and miserable life in the trenches was:

'Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army  
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey.'

This is also a metaphor for the battle against the clouds and rain as well as the enemy troops. The use of pathetic fallacy adds to the threatening tone of the war. However, the word 'melancholy' personifies the clouds and mirrors the emotion of the soldiers, which is less threatening and more depressed.

The use of pathetic fallacy and colour completely contrasts with this when the soldiers are reflecting on home:

'So we drowse, sun-dozed,  
Littered with blossoms trickling...'

This portrays warmth and relaxation – the complete opposite of the emotions they were enduring in the war. The imagery of 'blossoms' makes the reader think of flowers and new beginnings – all positive thoughts perhaps associated with the season of spring

Another colour, the only colour, used in the poem is 'dark-red' to describe 'crusted... jewels.' This could add to the idea of a more colourful, blissful life at home. However, they are described as 'crusted' as well as dark red which may signify scabs. This could symbolise the mental and physical wounds the men have; when they went home the scabs or scars would still be there – they will never leave.



The sounds used in the poem show the same contrast between reality and when the men's minds trail off into their own imaginations. When in the trenches, the men hear nothing but 'silence' and the 'mad gusts' of wind, occasionally broken by the rumble of 'gunnery' and 'flights of bullets'. These are all mentally disturbing sounds, especially over long periods of time. This adds to the depressing image of the trenches further. However, when the men begin to reminisce about home, Owen includes the image of 'blossoms trickling', which makes the reader imagine a cascade of tiny blossoms floating to the ground in a similar way to a waterfall.

Owen has also used verbs well in this poem. When the thoughts of the soldier and the readers are in the trenches, he writes phrases such as 'Our brains ache' and 'we cringe in holes'. The word 'cringe' conveys thoughts of the soldiers bent over in a painful state. This reinforces the idea that the men were in pain from all aspects of life at war.

In contrast, in the second half of the poem, when our minds are alongside the soldiers' at war, the verbs used become much more positive. The way the crickets 'jingle' connotes a jolly feeling of celebration such as Christmas. This is also done with the word 'rejoice' which gives a joyous and songful tone to the stanza. Owen then shifts back to the bleak and miserable setting of the trenches fairly quickly.

The way that the war confused the men's thoughts is shown in stanza seven when they begin to question their faith in God. Owen shows in the first two lines that the men started fighting believing they were making the right decision. However, the last line, 'For love of God seems dying', suggests that they are losing faith. The confusing syntax and choice of words could possibly be representing their confusion in religion.

Wilfred Owen adds some extremely morbid imagery in to the last stanza of 'Exposure':  
'The burying-party, picks and shovels in their shaking grasp,  
Pause over half-known faces.'

As well as presenting disturbing images on which the reader can reflect, the line could have been worded like so in order to show the vast number of men dying. He carries on describing 'All their eyes are ice'. It is unclear who he is talking about at this point: it could either be the dead bodies whose eyes are frozen and lifeless. He could also be describing the eyes of those burying the bodies, who could either feel freezing cold or emotionally numb from the horrific experience they are enduring.

With the use of pathetic fallacy, the evocation of senses and a variety of verbs, Owen clearly shows the vulnerability of the men in the trenches to their own thoughts. They were 'exposed' to the challenges the war threw in their direction. Many of the men realised, in times as the poem describes, that their lives, even when they returned home, would never be the same.

1062 words

### Moderation Comments

At the beginning, the essay gives a solid opening historical context for the selected poem. The essay goes on to focus on aspects of the writing of the poem in a listing style, without always placing the features within a coherent reading of the developing meaning of the poem.

The early comments on rhyme scheme are linked to the meaning of the poem, making a straightforward link with the monotony of the soldiers' waiting. The essay voices personal responses to ellipses and the auditory effects of sibilance. These comments are again linked to meaning though without developing their place in the poem. Comments show response at a straightforward level.

There are appropriate comments on Owen's monochrome palette of language, battle imagery and the use of pathetic fallacy though individual observations, each supported with apposite quotations. A fully coherent argument is not developed, so that the significance within poem of the contrast with 'drowse, sun-dozed' is not explored.

Straightforward suggestions are made about 'dark-red' and the sounds included in the poem, which are asserted rather than argued from a full exploration of the language. The linguistic focus is more defined when considering 'cringe'.

The incongruence of diction such as 'jingle' and 'rejoice' is noted, but not explored, while a comment on 'confusing syntax' is not explained, but asserted. Similarly, the comment on 'morbid' and 'disturbing' imagery is appropriate but does not arise from analysis.

Although the conclusion repeats earlier points, the essay develops a solid, straightforward view of 'Exposure' with some focus on its details. Apart from the assertion that sound effects are 'used a lot' in Owen's poetry, there is no reference to any other poem, so the essay gives no sense of how this poem might be characteristic of Owen's poetry or might present connections with other poems in the collection studied. **(LEVEL 3)**



## Exemplar 4

### Task 1: Recreative writing with commentary

Text: *Saturday* by Ian McEwan

Imagine that Perowne has to take the tube train home from work on Friday evening before the 'Saturday' that the book takes its title from. Imitate McEwan's style and the character's thoughts, concerns and feelings.

#### Recreated Passage

Henry Perowne steps onto the tube train; he pushes his way through the crowd that is standing right by the doorway and he takes his seat. He gazes around the train and catches a whiff of Bromhidrosis. Whilst gazing around he is drawn to the suitcases left alone near the door; it was unlikely for them to be left unattended. The calmness of the scene was unimaginable; surely somebody would have noticed this? This is how incidents like 9/11 occurred; no one looks out for these minor details. The people of London need to be more aware of their surroundings. He knows it is part of his everyday life to observe these minute details, but he just can't help but wonder whether if everyone noticed little things like this, they could have been stopped before they even began.

Henry is interrupted in his train of thoughts by an elderly woman struggling to get down to her seat; he carefully helps her take her seat but he cannot help but notice the amount of Telangiectata that covers her face, and the overpowering smell of urine that is wafting his way every time she makes a sudden movement. This is upsetting for Henry to watch; he cannot help but think of his mother left all alone in that lonely little room of hers, unaware that she even has offspring or that she even had someone to love her. It is heartbreaking for Henry even to consider, especially on the day of love, the day many countries come together with their partners to celebrate their love. He gets up now, eager to get home to his Rosalind.

#### Commentary

McEwan's novel explores responses to terrorist events, seen in Perowne's reaction to the aircraft: 'It's a trick of vision that makes him think he can see an outline now a deeper black shape against the dark. The howl of the burning engine continues to rise in pitch'. His fear of terrorism in response to small disturbances suggests that he is a paranoid person. I have imitated this sense of fear in his observations on the tube: 'whilst gazing around he is drawn to the suitcases left alone near the door; it was unlikely for them to be left unattended'. This observation of detail is also a feature of McEwan's presentation of Perowne. McEwan is showing the worry felt by society after terrorist attacks on major cities. Perowne's paranoia is important to the novel's effects: when he thinks he is being followed by Baxter, readers might think this is a paranoid response, but we discover he is actually being followed by Baxter.

McEwan shows that family is also important to Perowne; he is upset when he is away from them, apparent in 'His family is downstairs, and he's feeling very lonely'. My piece also shows this concern for family as Perowne thinks about 'his mother left all alone in that lonely little room of hers, unaware that she even has offspring or that she even had someone to love her' and focused in the adjective 'heartbreaking' and his desire 'to get home to his Rosalind'. Perowne's concern for his family is clear in his reaction to Baxter. However, Perowne could have avoided a lot of the trouble if he wasn't so arrogant to bring his intelligence into the argument to try and manipulate Baxter.

McEwan slips medical terms 'Transsphenoidal' and 'hypophysectomy' into Perowne's thoughts to show his intelligence and background. I have also used the medical terms 'Telangiectata' and 'Bromhidrosis' in a similar way. I have also suggested that he diagnoses people he meets. In my passage, when he sees 'An elderly woman struggling to get down to her seat; he carefully helps her take her seat but he cannot help but notice the amount of Telangiectata that covers her face, and the overpowering smell of urine that is wafting his way every time she makes a sudden movement'. This shows his knowledge but also his distaste. Perowne's medical knowledge has a huge impact on the situation with Baxter when Perowne points out his condition, as he thinks Perowne is trying to embarrass him in front of his friends.

McEwan has written *Saturday* as subjective third person narrative, granting the readers only a perspective from Perowne's point of view. I have imitated this in my recreative passage, describing events as seen through Perowne's eyes. When 'he takes his seat', he 'gazes around the train' and notices the bags, drawing them to the reader's attention. McEwan also writes in the present tense, creating a sense of immediacy and tension to the novel.





Stream of consciousness is also a feature of McEwan's novel, the rapid changes of thought seen for example in 'A neural disease. The wing mirror. The rear view mirror. I lost at squash.' McEwan shows Perowne thinking or talking about one thing, then drifting off into other thoughts before returning to what he was originally thinking about. I have used this technique in my piece: 'He gazes around the train and catches a whiff of Bromhidrosis. Whilst gazing around he is drawn to the suitcases left alone near the door.'

The use of stream of consciousness gives a realistic insight into Perowne's mind. It is sometimes composed of lengthy sentence structures with a lot of punctuation: 'millions teeming around the accumulated and layered achievements of the centuries, as though around a coral reef sleeping, working, entertaining themselves, harmonious for the most part, nearly everyone wanting it to work.' He uses a lot of commas and punctuation. I have tried to imitate this kind of structure at the end of the first paragraph: 'This is how incidents like 9/11 occurred; no one looks out for these minor details. The people of London need to be more aware of their surroundings. He knows it is part of his everyday life to observe these minute details, but he just can't help but wonder whether if everyone noticed little things like this, they could have been stopped before they even began.'

McEwan uses educated and eloquent language, seen in: 'in response she has an air of merry intelligence, an undiminished taste or fun.' More than a plain description, this evokes a sense of the character. I have imitated this educated style in 'It is heartbreaking for Henry even to consider, especially on the day of love, the day many countries come together with their partners to celebrate their love.'

McEwan's presentation of Perowne affects everything that happens in the novel; his character and perception of the world are responsible for the events, which are described through his point of view. This is what I have tried to reflect in my piece of writing.

274 words in passage

841 words in commentary

#### **Moderation Comments**

The recreated passage is appropriate in its setting, content and style. The character of Perowne is recreated effectively, with use of tense, type of observations and thought processes a clear imitation of McEwan's narrative style in *Saturday*. The stylistic characteristics and concerns of the text are imitated in a developed and appropriate way.

The commentary picks up on these features, using a number of quotations to make precise connections with the original text. In this way, a detailed and developed appreciation of McEwan's style is shown. In order to do this, there is extended discussion of narrative style, considering the use of Perowne's point of view controlling a third person narrative and the rapid shifts of his mind created through a version of stream of consciousness. These points are carefully exemplified both within *Saturday* and the recreated piece.

McEwan's use of technical medical vocabulary is noted, imitated and its significance to the novel explored, while the immediacy created by the use of the present tense is also discussed effectively.

London in a post-terror attack state is also clearly established as the setting of the passage and the way this informs the novel is clearly understood. **(LEVEL 5)**



## Task 1: Recreative writing with commentary

Text: *The Time Traveller's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger

Write a recreative passage based on *The Time Traveller's Wife* to be inserted within the chapter where Claire and Gomez are spending time together. Add a commentary which shows how your passage is an appropriate imitation of Niffenegger's style and concerns in the novel.

### Recreated Passage

*Saturday, July 12, 2008* (Clare is 37)

Clare

'Mama, mama'

I froze; I didn't know what was going on. I sit up, jump off the table and run for the bathroom but Charisse is standing in front of the bathroom door. I panic, I want to say something but nothing comes out. The words are stuck in my throat. I try. But nothing is coming out. Why am I in this situation? My body feels numb. I can't move, speak or even think straight. I don't know what I feel at the moment. Shocked? Scared? Surely it must be one of them? I think to myself this has to be a dream, I avoided eye contact. But I can feel her piercing stares rip through my skin like a warm knife cut through golden butter.

I look at her straight in eyes for the first time and I can see she is hurt. She looks off into the distance for a while. Her face is concentrating on the outside, the rain and dark skies. The rain stops and she is smiling, as if some sort of angel has come from above and took all her anger away. She looks innocent and full of life. Completely different to how she looked 5 minutes ago, I don't know what to say so I just open my mouth and...

'Charisse ----- I am ----- I AM SORRY'

*What have I done, what have I become; I am the traveller now*

Charisse

'How... could... we were best friends!'

She refuses to look at me, but my eyes stick to her like glue.

I'd never thought I would witness the day Clare and Gomez, my two favourite people would betray me. My life has been grey to this very day. I can hear the rain smack the window, its ruthless roar of rage attacking the double-glazed glass again and again. Never ending cycle of violence.

All this anger I had built up in me has been inflated by the sorrow look on Claire's face. I can feel her emotions running through my veins.

Suddenly the rain stops, the sun forces its way through the clouds struggling to see the light of day. The clouds and the sun fight for a while, exchanging blows. The sun comes out on top and rainbow emerges. That's when I come to my senses.

'Charisse ----- I am ----- I AM SORRY'

She's naked, I admire her body. I've always been jealous of Claire, Ever since we met I've been jealous of her. Her skin glows as the sun glides of her body. The window is cracked and so a beam of light spears through the gap and beautifies what is already beautiful. I sit there and think to myself, who am I to get angry at her when it's not her fault. I'd be attracted to her if I were Gomez. What? Why am I showing her mercy? I have been the biggest support to Claire through all the bad times and the good. She on the other hand is a double edged blade. Hurting everything she touches me, Gomez, Henry and even her own little daughter.

### Commentary

In my recreation on *The Time Travellers Wife*, I have adopted the style of the author. My recreation is based around the chapter where Claire and Gomez are 'spending time' with each other and Charisse almost walks in. However in my recreation Charisse does walk in on them while Claire and Gomez are busy appreciating each other's company.

I start off my recreation with Alba yelling 'mama' as she walks in. Clare hears this and panics. The text is very descriptive and packed with imagery.

'I sit up, jump off the table and run for the bathroom'. In the novel Audrey Niffenegger uses a lot of imagery which sinks a vivid image in the readers head. I have copied her technique in this text so the reader has a clear picture of what is going on. The novel has minimal dialect so I have tried to avoid characters speaking too much. My text is mostly descriptive and a soliloquy. Most of my text is what the characters are thinking.

'Shocked? Scared? Surely...!' I have chosen to use alliteration in my text because A.N. uses it a lot in her novel and it was appropriate for me to do so. Throughout my text I have used similes. A constant wave of similes is what A.N. uses in her novel and if this text was added to the novel it



would fit in exceptionally. Also my text has a flow to it. In my text the event that just happened is being narrated by both Clare and Charisse. Both go through an emotional rollercoaster and realise how much they mean to each other. Clare realises what she has done, what she has become. 'I am the traveller now' Clare says this because at the beginning of the play Clare and Gomez had a fling and it was never spoken of after, until Clare told Henry herself. She claims to be the traveller now because of her past and why she is in this situation. At the beginning of Charisse's section she was really angry at Clare for what she has done, but later relaxes. Her mood is in sync with the weather because when the storm ended she lightened up and forgave Clare. I have used many language devices in my text. My text also adopts feminist views with Clare. The female need to fill the void of Henry's absence through sex shows how much of a 'male craving' female she is. Additionally in the novel is explores the recurring theme of Clare needing to replace Henry after his death and during his disappearance. This is why she had a fling with Gomez. Before she met Henry years after he stopped coming to the meadow and after Henry passed.

528 words in passage

457 words in commentary

### **Moderation Comments**

The recreated passage attempts to recreate the style of the original novel and shows some knowledge of situation and characters, exploring different perspectives. There is some limited success in these attempts.

The commentary takes the reader through the recreated passage with explanations. The level of analysis is limited. Comments such as 'Niffenegger' uses a lot of imagery' and a 'constant wave of similes' are not exemplified or explored. There is some misuse of terminology, 'dialect' being used instead of 'dialogue'. The reference to 'feminist views' suggests a limited understanding. The commentary does show some knowledge of the novel, its characters and events. **(LEVEL 2)**



## Task 2: Comparative Essay Exemplar Responses with Examiner Commentary

### Exemplar 1:

Texts: *North* by Seamus Heaney and *Translations* by Brian Friel

**Both Friel and Heaney delve into history in order to consider contemporary Irish politics. Compare the methods they use in *Translations* and *North* to create a link and illuminate their own time by an examination of the past.**

Heaney and Friel presented their works in 1975 and 1980 respectively, during a period of great turbulence in Irish history after the British put troops in Northern Ireland in 1969. After the Bloody Sunday massacre in 1972, it is clear that these two texts explore concepts of violence, human nature, colonialism and relationships brought up by this catastrophe.

Heaney uses carefully chosen diction in order to link past and present, demonstrable in 'The Grauballe Man', where he uses the phrase, 'of each hooded victim// slashed and dumped'. The word 'hooded victim' draws back connotations to IRA killings, where victims were hooded before they were killed. The critic Paul Hurt said 'this may be too severe, but to me, 'and dumped' seems almost an afterthought and an anti-climax, almost as if the poem has been suddenly abandoned.'<sup>1</sup> However, he has overlooked how 'dumped' is a reference to the contemporary political situation. Furthermore, the word carries a sense of weight, thus creating a more vivid image. In 'Punishment', Heaney writes, 'cauled in tar', showing how his reflection on this bog body led him to think of the practice of covering those women who had affairs with British men in tar and feathers, creating a strong link with the tribal practices seen in 'Punishment'.

Friel uses similar referents to the past which are synonymous with the present. Owen says, 'he's left – gone away', which draws a direct reference to the abduction of soldiers by the IRA during the Troubles. Friel's approach is more direct, no surprise given the dramatic medium, and for an audience member, the reference to disappearances resonates strongly, illustrating the past's continuation into the present: nothing has changed, which creates a strong connection with Heaney's poetry. At the end of *Translations*, Jimmy discusses 'exogamein', that's to say 'to marry outside the tribe'. This relates directly to Heaney's discussion of women 'cauled in tar'. This reference again links past to present; time has moved on, but the issues and responses to fundamental issues have not.

This relationship between past and present is presented differently, Heaney taking a more reflective, distanced view, because, as he said, 'my emotions, my feeling, whatever those instinctive energies are that have to be engaged for a poem, those energies quickened more when contemplating a victim, strangely, from 2000 years ago than they did from contemplating a man at the end of our road being swept into a plastic bag.'<sup>2</sup> The decision to remain distant from Ireland allows him to write poetry that is more universal in terms of the issues it addresses – the 'tribal intimate revenge' he talks of in 'Punishment' isn't specifically directed at Ireland. This has however attracted criticism as, 'some critics have placed Heaney in a no-win situation; he is condemned either for confronting too strongly the situation in his homeland, or taken to task for remaining aloof from it.'<sup>3</sup> However, by remaining distant, Heaney can comment more effectively on the ubiquitous nature of the conflict. The title of one poem, 'Strange Fruit', makes a reference to lynching in the American South, which makes the issue not simply one of Ireland. He also says in 'Act of Union' (which is a far more direct title indicative of Ireland: the Act of Union 1922 which created the state of Northern Ireland), 'that leaves you raw, like opened ground, again'. The reference to the Act of Union creates a metaphor of a sexual relationship with England, and, with lines such as, 'within whose borders now my legacy// culminates inexorably' drawing a critical view of the 'beating at your borders', the embryonic Northern Ireland. This shows that the seeds sown in the past bear fruit in the future. This is demonstrated by the word 'again', emphasised by its placement at the end of the poem, and the minor caesura that precedes it, bringing a sense of perpetuity to the poem, that this has happened before, and it will happen, or is happening, again.

Friel is again more direct, and places his characters at the time of the Ordnance Survey in Ireland in 1833. Some critics, such as J.H. Andrews, argue that Yolland's complaint, 'the maps they've completed can't be printed without these names. So London screams at Lancelot... 'is a 'mistake that makes the Survey seem more foreign than it was'<sup>4</sup> because the map would have been printed in Dublin. However, this view seems reductive, as Dr Leon Litvack points out: 'Andrews over-historicises the play, blind to Friel's metaphorical impulse for incorporating the Survey.'<sup>5</sup> Friel's placement in the past is not meant to be an historical reconstruction: there is only one real person mentioned in the entire play. Friel himself concedes that it has no intention of being historical: in his *Sporadic Diary* he says 'if it is not political what is it? Inaccurate history?'<sup>6</sup> In fact, the slight distortion of history serves to emphasise the importance of the present; it demonstrates that Friel is less concerned with writing a play of the past, but one of today, with reference to the past. Hugh says this himself in the play: 'it is not the literal past, the 'facts' of history, that

1 Paul Hurt on <http://www.linkagenet.com/reviews/heaneypoemcriticism.htm#north>

2 Seamus Heaney quoted in Neil Corcoran's *A Student Guide to Seamus Heaney* London 1986 p.96

3 <http://www.ibiblio.org/ipa/poems/heaney/biography.php>

4 Notes for A Future Edition of Brian Friel's *Translations* 1992/93 *The Irish Review*, line 100

5 <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/ireland/trans.htm>

6 Brian Friel's *Sporadic Diary*, 22 May.



shape us, but images of the past embodied in language.' This is exactly what both Friel and Heaney achieve: they interpret the past, perhaps not entirely accurately, (Heaney assumes in 'Punishment' that the girl is an 'adulteress', despite little archaeological evidence to suggest it) but with the effect of providing a subtle comment on the situation of contemporary Ireland. These are not works of history, but fiction. Moreover, Friel does this within the play by Hugh's discussion of the 1798 rebellion: 'Going into battle... Two young gallants with pikes across their shoulders... got homesick for Athens, just like Ulysses.' Friel's musing upon the past is not dissimilar from Heaney's reflections upon the bog bodies, reading from them the same message of violence that he sees around him. Lancey's final speech could as easily be seen in the 1830s as in the 1980s – a response to a British soldier giving demanding orders to the Irish populace. The only thing that has changed is the uniform, from red to khaki.

Furthermore, Friel uses classical myths and imagery, such as, 'Thermopylae! Thermopylae!' This is a reference to the battle of Thermopylae, which saw a huge army held off by a smaller force, not dissimilar from the IRA's defence of Ireland. Furthermore, as the lights are dimmed, Hugh tries to remember a passage from *The Aeneid*: 'a race was springing from Trojan blood to overthrow some day these Tyrian towers... proud in war who would come forth for Lybia's downfall...' Hugh's failed attempts to remember this verse, crying 'what the hell's wrong with me? Sure I know it backwards,' along with the lowering of the lights and the final ellipsis, ironically undermine the idea that 'Lybia' (or the British) will 'downfall', a dig at the perpetuity of British rule. From Cromwell in the 1650s through to 1980s Ireland, the British still haven't fallen. Friel has, however, been criticised for this: J.H. Andrews accused him of 'transposing Cromwellian notions into a nineteenth century framework'.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Brian McAvera believes Friel to be giving 'traditional nationalist myths... credence' – the 'cultural dispossession by the British'.<sup>8</sup> Whilst in one sense this may be true, Friel does not paint the British so black and white: it is Yolland who is uneasy in translating, believing that 'something is being eroded.' It is he who attempts to preserve Irish culture, not Owen.

Whilst Heaney uses classical and Norse legends and imagery, he does not always do so to the same effect as Friel. Jonathan Wilcox noted, 'Heaney demonstrated how northern mythology and turbulent northern history could resonate with a contemporary landscape of violence.'<sup>9</sup> The very title of the collection, *North*, is a reference to the Norse invaders. In the poem 'North' he writes of 'those fabulous raiders' and in 'Funeral Rites':

'...Gunnar  
who lay beautiful  
inside his burial mound  
though dead by violence  
and unavenged.  
Men said that he was chanting.'

The reference to both the history of the north and their mythology creates an image of invaders. However, they are, like Yolland, not presented in such an unequivocal manner as one may expect: the raiders are 'fabulous' and Gunnar, a warrior is glorified, his 'joyful face' turning 'to look at the moon'. This demonstrates Heaney's reflection upon the past not being entirely a criticism the present. In 'Bone Dreams', he uses a biblical allusion: 'the sling of mind', a reference to David and Goliath, which much like Hugh's 'Thermopylae! Thermopylae!' and creates an image of a powerful enemy being slain by a smaller force. These images can be seen as encouraging the IRA, something Heaney has been criticised for, for granting 'sectarian killing in Northern Ireland a historical respectability which it is not granted in day to day journalism: precedent becomes, if not justification, then at least an 'explanation'.<sup>10</sup> This view is understandable for Heaney's use of 'sling' does appear to encourage the underdogs of the Irish. However, Heaney's use of classical allusion allows for a deeper perspective. In 'Strange Fruit', he says, 'Diodorus Siculus confessed', which is a reference to the ancient Greek historian who 'confessed' that the constant exposure to war had allowed him to accept it. Heaney himself takes a similar view: in 'Punishment' he writes that he would

'...connive  
in civilized outrage  
yet understand the exact  
and tribal, intimate revenge.'

The classical reference allows Heaney to show his own understanding of the tribal nature of the conflict in Ireland, and by tying it to the past, underline the tribalism involved and the inevitable conclusion. It is not an 'explanation', but a mourning for the inbuilt desire to kill. He also comments on the sadness that comes with such constant warfare: a simple acceptance of it as reality, which resonates strongly with a modern reader who has become acclimatised and accustomed to warfare's constant killing. Thus, Heaney does not provide an 'explanation' for the killing; instead he laments our acceptance of it.

Language is a key concern in *Translations* as an issue on its own; however, it is multifaceted in its effect on an audience. It is apparent in Friel's use of Latin and Greek, so called 'dead languages', and the 'theatrical conceit'<sup>11</sup> whereby the audience hears English, while the characters are 'speaking' Gaelic. That by the 1980s Gaelic is all but extinct is a central irony of the play, and Friel's placement of the play at the time of the start of mandatory education of the young in English underlines the issue of communication in modern times along with the erosion of Irish culture, by the imposition of the British language. In 1831, two years before the setting of *Translations*, mandatory English education was imposed. Friel demonstrates how language is a part of one's cultural identity: Owen asks his father, 'do you know where the priest lives?' to which Hugh replies, 'At Lis na Muc, over near...' but the names have now changed; he is lost within his own home. Friel ties this to contemporary Irish politics: 1971 saw Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act published, banning members of Sinn Féin from having their voices broadcast. The issue of an Irishman not being able to speak his own language in his own country is therefore raised. Robert Welch offers an alternative reading however: 'far from being a lament for the disappearance of the Irish language, *Translations* embodies an awareness of cultural differences, and the tragedies and

7 From *The Art of Brian Friel* by Elmer Andrews, p.166

8 From *The Art of Brian Friel* by Elmer Andrews, p.166

9 <http://www.poetrymagazines.org.uk/magazine/record.asp?id=13130>

10 Blake Morrison *Seamus Heaney* London 1982 p.68

11 *Brian Friel's Sporadic Diary* 14 May



violence they generate. It is an unsentimental analysis of the politics of language.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Friel decides to have both Irish and English speaking English, but also to show difficulties in communication, such as Yolland and Maire's inability to communicate: 'what's he saying?'; 'what's she saying?'; 'I wish to God you could understand me.' This highlights one of the greatest links between past and present. Despite both parties now speaking in English, there remains the same inability to communicate, emphasising the perpetual futility of communication between Irish republicans, loyalists and the British.

Heaney delves into the varying language of the past as well, both explicitly and implicitly. He writes in 'Bone Dreams'; 'I push back//through dictions//Elizabethan canopies.//Norman devices... to the scop's//twang, the iron,' to illustrate the need for a language that better reflects the Irish people. The polysyllabic, decadent, 'Elizabethan canopies', contrast with the 'scop's//twang', two monosyllabic, onomatopoeic words, that describe simply and effectively that which they intend. By delving into the language of the past, Heaney uncovers the same concerns that Friel does: an inability to communicate effectively in their own language. In the words of Hugh, 'a rich language... a civilisation can be imprisoned by a linguistic contour which no longer matches the landscape of... fact.' Heaney wants a language which, 'cleav[es] the line', allowing the Irish people to communicate truly. Furthermore, he implicitly looks to history to find a technique to express himself – Heaney frequently uses kennings to connect the effective language of the past to his own poetry. The kenning, a technique used in Anglo-Saxon literature, is the connection of two words with a hyphen: 'flint-find'; 'bone-house' combine two images into one allowing him to express himself better, and escape the 'canopies' of English diction. This use of a language of a previous invader can be seen as slightly ironic given that he is using it in response to a new invader.

Although both Friel and Heaney use different techniques and different perspectives, they focus on remarkably similar concerns of the present by delving into different times in the past. Friel's situation in 1830s Ireland draws more obvious links of English invader then, and English invader now, whilst Heaney's poetry is more subtle in tackling Irish politics, something he was criticised for failing to do. Whilst one could read both pieces as simply a period piece and an observation of bog bodies, this appears reductive, and it is the connection drawn between past and present that brings poignancy to both, especially in the hearts and minds of an Irish audience. Although criticised for granting 'explanation' to the violence in Ireland, a closer reading reveals that Heaney does not explain but criticises, himself, the Irish people and humanity's brutal nature. Friel neither condemns nor condones the Irish or British, explaining how both are guilty at times of certain conceit, although his ending is bleak, resonating strongly with the seemingly eternal nature of empire in Hugh's final lines, an eternity that is past, present and future, much like Heaney's 'Act of Union':

'no treaty  
I foresee will salve completely your tracked  
and stretchmarked body, the big pain  
that leaves you raw, like opened ground, again.'

### Bibliography

<i>North</i>	Seamus Heaney	Faber	1972
<i>Translations</i>	Brian Friel	Faber	1980
<i>The Achievement of Brian Friel</i>	Alan Peacock	Colin Smythe	1992
<i>The Art of Brian Friel</i>	Elmer Andrews	Macmillan	1995
<i>Extracts from a Sporadic Diary</i>	Brian Friel		
<i>Seamus Heaney</i>	Blake Morrison	Routledge	1992
<i>A Student Guide to Seamus Heaney</i>	Neil Corcoran	Faber	1986

Notes for A Future Edition of Brian Friel's *Translations*, *The Irish Review*, 1992/93

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/ireland/trans.htm>

<http://www.linkagenet.com/reviews/heaneypoemcriticism.htm#north>

<http://www.ibiblio.org/ipa/poems/heaney/biography.php>

<http://www.poetrymagazines.org.uk/magazine/record.asp?id=13130>

2443 words

561 quotations

1882 net words

### Moderation Comments

This is an excellent and detailed essay, responding fully to the texts and the task set. This is clear from the opening, incorporating relevant historical context, directed purposefully towards the task.

While dealing with big historical and political ideas, it remains a focused literary essay, exploring Friel's dramatic and Heaney's poetic methods, with close detailed references and Interpretation of language details. The argument weaves its approach to the question and the context, developed with references to critical readings, which are often challenged, always explored.

The essay makes a number of detailed comments on different parts of the play and on different poems to explore points, demonstrating a full and detailed understanding of both texts. Occasionally points would benefit from a little more explanation.

While connections between the texts are explored, differences are also carefully teased out. Heaney's own observations on his approaches and choices of subject matter are used as a context and critical responses to his position are explored.

<sup>12</sup> From *Isn't Your Job? – To translate? : Brian Friel's Language* by Robert Welch, in Peacock, p.145



The approach is similar with *Translations*, as the essay balances different critical responses to Friel's dramatic treatment of history, tracing an independent argument with reference to the context of Friel's own comments about the writing of the play. This is used to develop a comparison between the two texts, which are then related to a modern context. The essay is also informed by excellent grasp of genre, looking at the dramatic effects in Friel's play.

The essay challenges critical views of the play with detailed evidence from the text and there is similar detailed exploration of different critical views of Heaney's position within the political debate. A detailed personal argument is developed, based on close reading and understanding of the poetry. There is close attention to the effects of language choices in Heaney's poems and of the dialogue in *Translations*.

There is plentiful evidence of a clear grasp of the historical and political contexts, looking at mid-nineteenth century Ireland and the events of the 1970s, developing into a broader point with consideration of play's dialogue and a critical reading. There is also thoughtful consideration of poems, developed by attention to particular details of language and metaphor.

The conclusion skilfully and stylishly draws together the threads of argument, sealing the comparison.

Sources are acknowledged by footnotes and bibliography. **(LEVEL 6)**





## Exemplar 2

Texts: *Journey's End* by R.C. Sherriff and *Regeneration* by Pat Barker

### Compare and contrast how Sherriff and Barker use their characters in *Journey's End* and *Regeneration* to demonstrate the traumatic effects of war.

Where *Journey's End* focuses on what happens in a World War 1 trench over the space of just four days, *Regeneration* presents the after-effects of such experiences on the men and society outside of the war. Despite this difference in focus, we can still see strong links between the way that R.C. Sherriff and Pat Barker use their characters to show the suffering caused by the war and perhaps all wars. Barker has stated her belief that 'the First World War has come to stand for the pain of all wars.'

When writing *Regeneration*, Pat Barker had the advantage of around 80 years of hindsight to focus on the long-term effects of the war, whereas Sherriff, who would have witnessed and experienced all of the terrible suffering presented in the play, published *Journey's End* not long after the conflict. Their texts and characters would therefore have been created for slightly different purposes.

Sherriff's purpose was to show – or remind – his audiences what the soldiers were put through. A modern audience may see the play as an 'anti-war' piece as it shows the intense suffering in the trenches. However, at the time it would have first been performed, the audience would have been more accustomed to the pain and anguish: after all, they would have lived through a war. Sherriff did not see his play as an anti-war piece at all – though it is regarded as such now. His intentions were to honour the memory of his comrades. He wanted to show the suspense and waiting around endured by the soldiers. It could be argued that it shows the 'wasted time' during the war.

Barker's purpose is more open to interpretation. Although she makes her readers reflect on various agonising experiences by creating such distressed characters, some critics have said that she felt the need to prove herself as a versatile author. She was well known for writing 'feminist' novels or writing about female experiences and many critics speculated that she was unable to write about men. This novel was to prove them all incorrect as she won many awards when it was published.

Nevertheless, Barker still chooses to represent the women of the time in her novel. She uses the characters Sarah Lumb and Lizzie to do this. Sarah is used to show the effects that the war had on relationships when the men returned. Her romance with Billy Prior shows us how the men could never quite forget about their experiences, however special the moment is. For example, after their intimate scene at the beach, Barker adds

'Abruptly, the joy died. Prior became quite suddenly depressed. He pushed his half- finished meal away.

'What is it?'

'Oh I was remembering a man in my platoon.'

This shows how brusquely the war came back to Prior and how it was never far from the men's mind. It would be particularly difficult for the women to deal with this as they would not have known fully what their men had experienced: this was largely due to the men's reluctance to communicate.

In *Journey's End*, R.C. Sherriff uses the character of Raleigh to represent the many young men who would have entered the trenches with an innocent and naive attitude. They wouldn't have known what to expect once they had either signed up or been conscripted. Not long after Raleigh enters Captain Stanhope's company, the Colonel puts him forward for a raid on the German trenches. In the audience's eyes, this is a ghastly decision as he is only a boy, but at the time, this would have been a regular occurrence.

During the raid, Raleigh witnesses the death of Osborne. Sherriff describes his reactions on returning perfectly. '*Raleigh comes slowly down the steps, walking as though he were asleep; his hands are bleeding...*' For hours following the raid, Raleigh is really quiet and thoughtful. He is presented as a broken soul. Young boys would have had to endure this often and I believe that this was part of Sherriff's way of making his audience reminisce about the traumatic experiences that adolescents were open to during World War One. Raleigh's experience still remains relevant to audiences today, for a number of reasons. Historians are still interested to know the facts and experiences from the time, but I believe that the



main reason is that there are still many wars going on today around the world. Young men that are involved in conflict nowadays can still relate to Raleigh's thoughts and emotions.

In a similar way, Pat Barker uses the character of David Burns to show how the trenches destroyed young men both mentally and physically. Burns' situation is disturbing to imagine as a reader. He had the awful experience of being 'thrown into the air by the explosion of a shell and had landed, head-first, on a German corpse, whose gas-filled belly had ruptured on impact.' Due to this horrific event, Burns is traumatised. He is unable to eat as it brings back the memories of tasting rotten flesh. This makes him sick and causes his condition to worsen. Picturing this happening to any poor soul is upsetting. As a reader, putting yourself into that position is close to impossible and envisioning having to go through all of the mental torture is horrifying. He is not only mentally damaged but he is physically deteriorating also.

Rivers admits when we are first introduced to Burns that 'Perhaps the most distressing feature of his case was the occasional glimpse of the cheerful and likeable young man he must once have been.' It could be argued that Barker is using his case not only to demonstrate the trauma young men were put through, but the dehumanising of soldiers in WW1.

The long term effects that he suffered are displayed clearly in the latter part of the novel when Dr Rivers goes to visit Burns at home in Aldeburgh by the sea. Burns suffers from terrible nightmares that cause serious lack of sleep. During the night that Rivers stays with him, they are awoken by a loud noise from the lifeboat depot. This triggers something in Burns' memories that cause him to run away into a storm and get himself into a dangerous situation. Once Rivers recovers him from a moat and returns him home, the reader can tell how much the war has taken away from this young man. He will be severely mentally scarred from his experiences for an incredibly long time. Although he makes a few statements that are encouraging when it comes to his recovery, Rivers states 'He had missed his chance of being ordinary.' This would have been the case for many young men and I feel that this statement summarises their circumstances perfectly.

In *Regeneration*, Burns was a captain of his platoon. He would have had a great deal of responsibility whilst he was in France. 'He'd been promoted captain at the age of twenty-one, and this promotion coincided with the run up to the Somme campaign. In addition to all the other strains, he'd been aware of a widespread, though unvoiced, opinion in the company that he was too young for the command, though in length of service he had been senior.' This statement is almost an exact description of the situation Captain Stanhope finds himself in *Journey's End*. Both writers are representing the reality of the time – that young men were forced to do too much, too soon. Most of them had little or no experience. The experiences of the war often did irreparable damage to many soldiers. They were often referred to as the 'The Lost Generation'.

It is clear that Stanhope has an incredible sense of duty to his men: this leads him to hold back from taking leave as he does not want to abandon them. He feels it is more honourable to stay and carry on rather than go home. Sherriff uses Stanhope to present the negative consequences of such devotion. The stress of such responsibility has led to severe drinking problems. He states 'There were only two ways of breaking the strain. One was pretending I was ill – and going home; the other was this. [*He holds up his glass.*]' The drink takes the edge off all of his psychological misery and stress and allows him to carry on – to be the brave leader he feels he must be.

There is a link between the ways both writers show what the war did to all of those young men. They had to endure terrible self-sacrifice in order to fulfil the duty that was expected of them. If one did not fulfil this duty, one would feel emasculated and a coward. Society at the time expected an unflinching loyalty to king and country. Greg Harris has stated that 'the act of breaking down breaks unwritten codes dictating appropriate male behaviour... Rivers and Sassoon, in the novel as in life, are both well trained in emotional repression', but that Barker uses her historical source material to 'expose the ways in which masculinity was manipulated during wartime.'<sup>13</sup>

When looking into the themes of responsibility, R.C. Sherriff uses the Colonel to present a different type of duty. His character is used to show how disconnected the high ranking officers were from the individual soldiers whose lives were in their hands. When we are first introduced to the Colonel, Sherriff makes us instantly dislike him; this may have been due to Sherriff's personal experiences of his superior officers. Sherriff stirs up this dislike in particular through one conversation he has with Stanhope. The way that the Colonel chooses the men for the raid through a process of elimination makes them sound more like pieces on a chess board rather than men who were far away from home, most probably missing their families dearly.

His attitude could be seen as very callous as he moves on to say 'It's all a damn nuisance... Do you like fish? We've had fresh fish sent up... for supper tonight.' Sherriff juxtaposes a serious conversation which could determine men's lives with decisions about 'supper'.

In *Regeneration*, Barker uses Sassoon to question the whole topic of 'loyalty to your country' with her use of his declaration to open the novel. An upper class British man writing such a declaration was unheard of: it was a challenge to the social order. After spending a lot of time with Sassoon, his doctor, Rivers, also starts to question his duty to his country. On the last page of the novel, Rivers states 'A society that devours its own young deserves no automatic or unquestioning allegiance.' Relating back to the title of this essay, Barker is using her characters to perhaps show the views of people at the time who were afraid to state them, but is almost definitely our modern view of the situation.

Pat Barker also uses the character of Siegfried Sassoon to show how some men developed anger towards people at home. Towards the start of the novel, Sassoon has a conversation with Rivers about some older male views of the war. After Sassoon shows that he most definitely isn't impressed with their attitude, Rivers states:

'The point is you hate civilians, don't you? The 'callous', the 'complacent', the 'unimaginative'. Or is 'hate' too strong a word?'  
'No', Sassoon replied.'

<sup>13</sup> A phrase featured in a book by Ernest Hemmingway, credited to Gertrude Stein



The author shows us how even people of such high class and education that were meant to 'understand' the war, also lost complete faith. This is another example of Barker showing how not all was as it seemed; characters such as Sassoon presented the few people who had opposing views to the rest of the country.

Barker also uses Billy Prior to display similar emotions. Whilst walking along the beach on a busy day in summer with his new lover, Sarah, Prior says 'You wouldn't think there was a war on, would you?' whilst looking into the crowds of 'people swirling their tongues round ice-cream cones, biting into candy-floss, licking rock, sucking fingers, determined to squeeze the last ounce of pleasure from the day'. He feels that 'only Sarah connected him to the jostling crowd'. This also shows that the men sometimes didn't know how to react to the outside world. As has been shown, Pat Barker and R.C. Sherriff use their characters to express the traumatic effects of war. *Regeneration* focuses more on the long term effects, such as anger towards the public at home, questioning of one's loyalty to one's country and the mental anguish that the men would have had to endure once they had returned.

*Journey's End* focuses on the immediate effects that would have been suffered whilst still in the trenches. These include the stress of responsibility and the coping mechanisms to get themselves through the conflict and the intense encounters of death and injury to which young men were exposed.

As a reader in 2014, I found that even though these books are about 100 years ago, it is still possible to relate to the suffering that the young characters such as Raleigh were going through. With wars still being fought around the world, it makes us think about what all the men are enduring.

### Bibliography

<i>Journey's End</i>	RC Sherriff	Penguin	1928
<i>Regeneration</i>	Pat Barker	Viking	1991
<i>Regeneration</i>	Sarah Gamble	York Notes Advanced	2009
Sparknotes			

2197 words

321 quotations

1876 net words

### Moderation Comments

This essay gives a competent comparison between the two texts about the First World War. The beginning is clear and purposeful, linking the two texts in their historical context and initialising the comparison. There is an early useful discrimination of literary process when comparing the texts' times of composition.

This in turn leads to thoughtful consideration of different likely responses to Sherriff's play at the time of composition and in the present day, while the essay also considers the literary context of Barker's work and her literary reputation.

Secure references and quotations are used throughout the essay to support points. There is competent consideration of the authors' use of characters, which are clearly recognised for the most part as literary constructs. The context of wartime experiences, both in WW1 and later warfare, is appropriately used. Opportunities for exploring the effects of writers' choices are overlooked, however; the 'horrific event' for Burns is a clear example. The essay often asserts its points and conclusions, missing opportunities to explore language and effect. A further example is the comment that Sherriff 'makes us instantly dislike' the Colonel, with little indication of how this is achieved, though the next paragraph's reference to supper makes a contribution to the point. Literary analysis is not developed in the essay, but reaches a level of competence through the discussion of characterisation.

The war context is used appropriately throughout and is given some detail with comments on Sassoon's Declaration.

Comparison too is competently handled, connections always appropriate and sometimes detailed, such as the link between the presentation of Burns in *Regeneration* and the characterisation of Stanhope in *Journey's End*, which is linked well to historical context. The balance of the essay leans slightly towards novel with the play a little less well covered.

The essay features little exploration of different views and readings after the early consideration of audiences for *Journey's End*. Greg Harris is cited, but the source is not clearly acknowledged. There are no footnotes and the bibliography is limited. **(LEVEL 4)**



### Exemplar 3

Texts: *The Whitsun Weddings* by Philip Larkin and *Equus* by Peter Shaffer

**Despite dealing with challenging subjects, both *Equus* and *The Whitsun Weddings* prompt the reader or audience to re-evaluate how we should live our lives successfully. By comparing the exploration of such subjects by Shaffer and Larkin, say how far you agree with this view.**

Throughout Larkin's work the reader may notice that he seems to be cynical. Larkin is arguably pessimistic. 'I'm not pessimistic about people in general, but only about the way they live.' However, even though Philip Larkin is found of marriage and he proposed to his girlfriend Ruth, they never got married. Shortly after they had spilt up he developed a relationship with Monica Jones, this relationship although life long, did not prevent him from having other affairs.

Larkin's overlapping relationships were a sign of how Larkin used relationships to protect himself. In a similar way, Peter Shaffer's *Equus* also expresses similar views on relationships and children to Larkin. Larkin believes relationships and having children are not as happy and joyful as some portray it to be. He sees it as a 'misery' handed to man.

From the poem 'This Be The Verse' Larkin expresses his view on relationships and children. 'Get out as early as you can' from the relationship and do not 'have kids yourself'. This is a view that many would agree with as having children takes away your ability to choose freely and to do things on the spur of the moment as suddenly you are responsible for another person's life. Larkin believed that having children could be seen as somewhat of a curse. Shaffer expresses a similar view on relationships and children to that of Larkin. In *Equus* Dysart 'implies' that he cannot 'have any children'. This is seen as a problem because in the 1970s where it was commonplace to have children after marriage and the fact he cannot have children would leave him feeling embarrassed and somewhat emasculated. During the 1970s it was also a time when there were not any specific laws on divorce and despite his circumstances he would not be able to freely leave their marriage.

Additionally, both Larkin and Shaffer express similar views on relationships. In *The Whitsun Weddings* Larkin expresses his opinion about relationships in many poems, for example in 'An Arundel Tomb' Larkin explains how relationships may look successful to others but really the relationship is unsuccessful behind the scenes. The tomb is the work of the 'sculptor's' who has been 'commissioned' to capture a perfect image of the couple showing they are deeply in love. The couple are 'linked', not by love, but by children. It could be argued that many marriages become loveless but that the union is kept solely due to the children the couple have had. This is similar to Shaffer's play *Equus* to a certain extent. In Act 2 Scene 25, Dysart and Hesther talk about his relationship with Margaret. Dysart explains how he and his wife are too different and how he does not 'understand' his wife. Similar to 'An Arundel Tomb' Dysart and Margaret's relationship was good at some point. Dysart admits that it 'actually worked' for a bit, for 'the both of them'. However in the 1970s divorce laws were unclear and the divorce rate was low (9.2 women per 1000) and this meant that couples who often married for other reasons than love (social class, money etc.) were stuck with each other. This is somewhat similar to Dysart and Margaret's situation.

The sixties were a time of counterculture and revolution in social norms about clothing, music, drugs, dress, formalities and schooling. Conservatives denounced the decade as one of irresponsible excess, flamboyance, and decay of social order. The decade was also labelled the 'Swinging Sixties' because of the relaxation of social taboos which would suggest that during this time relationships were not as important and were not expected to last, however Dysart and Margaret were still together despite this.

In conclusion Peter Shaffer and Phillip Larkin's view on unsuccessful relationships lead the audience to re-evaluate how they should live their lives successfully.

Both Larkin and Shaffer express the fear of failure in their work. Larkin focuses on the fear of failure. Larkin explains how the fear of failure can affect your everyday life, such as in 'As Bad As A Mile' when he reveals he is so afraid of failure that he even refuses to take a bite from an apple due to the overwhelming feeling of failure. The feeling of failure can also be seen in Peter Shaffer's *Equus*, as in Dysart's dream in Act 1 scene 5 reveals how the fear of failure makes Dysart doubt his ability to work effectively. In 'As Bad As A Mile' after finishing an apple the 'core' needs to be thrown in the bin, so the character in this poem is afraid that they will not be able to throw the apple in the bin successfully. There is 'less and less of luck' and so the character has accepted failure. The 'apple' remains 'unbitten in the palm' as Larkin has yet to taste the sweet taste of success. Larkin



is saying that if success is not guaranteed then do not attempt the activity. And this is why the apple remains 'unbitten'. This makes the reader reconsider their approach to tasks, failure is a realistic prospect in everything that we do, however if we ensure that we plan sufficiently the fear of failure can be reduced. Always being driven by the fear of failure is no way to lead your life, you cannot leave the 'apple' alone forever instead you have to approach the task differently in order to minimise failure.

In *Equus* Act 1 Scene 5 Dysart has a dream. And in that dream he is a 'chief priest in Homeric Greece'. Dysart's subconscious mind is revealing that he is not confident in his work and that 'unknown to them' he has started feeling 'distinctly nauseous'. Even though he is 'top chief' and has a lot of skill, he is unconfident in his work. Dysart's face is going 'green under the mask' as Dysart is using the mask to hide his true emotions. The same way Larkin has not bitten the apple. He feels the mask makes him 'noble and bearded'. Dysart redoubles his efforts to look 'professional'. Dysart tries really hard to do his best but at the end his fear of failure overcomes him and the mask 'begins to slip'. The dream foreshadows how Dysart's fear of failure will overcome him and how his metaphorical mask will slip while treating Alan. This raises questions about how we feel about our professions and failure, and how the audience should live their life successfully.

Additionally, *Equus* and *The Whitsun Weddings* express the theme of work and the effects it has on people. Some enjoy the work they do and look forward to it, whereas others are continuously dissatisfied and do a job to live. There are many members of society who only see work as a means of 'paying a few bills'. In 'Toads Revisited' Larkin explains to the reader his view about work. And similar to 'Toads', 'Toads Revisited' has a negative tone towards work. 'Walking around the park should feel better than work' the word 'should' indicates that a walk in the park does not feel any better than work. Even though it should, it does not. This is because even though work is a nuisance, it is still really important to people and despite its negative effects it still helps to make a living. Taking a walk around a park will not 'pay the bills' and so taking a walk doesn't feel better than working. Larkin then describes the park using imagery 'the lake, the sunshine, the grass to lie on... yet it doesn't suit me' even though the park beautiful and described as being a nice, calm and peaceful place, he would much rather be at work because that's more of a priority than lying down and not doing anything.

When Larkin says 'All dodging the toad work' in this line Larkin is describing the people who take on benefits and do not work. Larkin deliberately used the words 'stupid or weak' which means he did not show any sympathy for the people who chose not to work. He puts himself in the shoes of the unemployed when he thinks 'of being them', 'nowhere to go but indoors, nor friends but empty chairs' Larkin is saying the unemployed are lonely people with no jobs, resources and nowhere to go. Nevertheless Peter Shaffer's views on work are somewhat different to Larkin's. His view is more along the lines of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In *Equus*, even though Dysart may be unhappy Alan really enjoys working in the stable. In Act I Scene 16 Alan is 'fascinated' through the whole scene. Dalton is giving Alan an induction around the stable and what and what not to do. Alan really enjoys it so he is constantly 'fascinated'. Alan 'watches in fascination' as Dalton brushes the horses. Alan is very pleased with this. Jill lets Alan stroke the horse. Alan gives a faint moan' which shows a connection to the reader. In being at the stables it gave Alan the chance to step away from his job in the electrical shop and to experience something more pleasurable. However, in Dysart's dream, it is clear to the audience he does not enjoy his work and he is pressured to continue in this line of employment. With the added pressure from the 'two assistants' who are 'strong and tireless' he starts to slip up and leads to the mask slipping. Therefore this then prompts the audience to re-evaluate whether they are living a successful life in their chosen area of work, are they satisfied or dissatisfied.

In conclusion both Peter Shaffer and Philip Larkin prompt the audience to re-evaluate how they should live successful lives through relationships, fear of failure and work. This then signifies how well the audience is doing. They can see if the fear of failure affects their everyday lives and prevents them from tasting the sweet taste of success or if they are unhappy in their relationships and completely hate their line of work.

#### Bibliography:

<i>Equus</i>	Peter Shaffer	Longman	1973
<i>The Whitsun Weddings</i>	Philip Larkin	Faber	1964

1663 words  
160 quotations  
1503 net words

#### Moderation Comments

This is a straightforward essay, showing some understanding of the two texts under discussion, although in a way which does not develop discussion of their literary qualities. The writing style is simple and hampered by some grammatical errors. The opening focus on Larkin is somewhat limited, consisting of assertion about the author's cynicism and biographical context which is not very helpful. The second paragraph's comments on Shaffer are similarly asserted.

The essay makes reference to a reasonable range of poems and each is treated in a similar way. A reading is offered through illustrated paraphrase which communicates a straightforward understanding without exploring the effects of Larkin's choices of language, form or structure. This is clear in the repeated use of such phrases as 'Larkin is saying', 'Larkin is describing' and 'Larkin explains'. Quotations from 'This Be The Verse' are used to illustrate what is asserted to be Larkin's personal view. This is linked to limited comments on Dysart in *Equus* with limited contextual points about divorce, which are sometimes inaccurate.



'An Arundel Tomb' is connected in a straightforward way with *Equus*, based on content. The essay uses historical data to connect with the characters, but the judgements made are rather simplistic. The paragraph on the sixties is of limited relevance, though a loose connection is made to Dysart at the end, leading to a straightforward conclusion to this stage of essay.

'As Bad As A Mile' is given a straightforward explanatory reading, lacking attention to its literary qualities. The approach is similar with Dysart's dream; here the metaphor is acknowledged but lacks full exploration. A straightforward comparison is made between the texts' views of work: Larkin seems to dislike it, whereas Alan enjoys work at the stable in *Equus*. The conclusion offers a recapitulation of the points of the essay and relates them to the task. The bibliography only acknowledges the core texts; there is no evidence of wider reading or critical engagement in the essay itself and no other sources are acknowledged. **(LEVEL 3)**





We'd like to know your view on the resources we produce. By clicking on the 'Like' or 'Dislike' button you can help us to ensure that our resources work for you. When the email template pops up please add additional comments if you wish and then just click 'Send'. Thank you.

If you do not currently offer this OCR qualification but would like to do so, please complete the Expression of Interest Form which can be found here: [www.ocr.org.uk/expression-of-interest](http://www.ocr.org.uk/expression-of-interest)

**OCR Resources: the small print**

OCR's resources are provided to support the teaching of OCR specifications, but in no way constitute an endorsed teaching method that is required by the Board and the decision to use them lies with the individual teacher. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions within these resources.

© OCR 2015 - This resource may be freely copied and distributed, as long as the OCR logo and this message remain intact and OCR is acknowledged as the originator of this work. OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: Thumbs up and down icons: alexwhite/Shutterstock.com

Please get in touch if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support delivery of our qualifications: [resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk](mailto:resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk)



## OCR customer contact centre

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)



For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored.

©OCR 2015 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England. Registered office 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.