**Year 12 English Literary Studies**

**Task Sheet**

**Assessment Type 3: Comparative Text Study**

**Purpose**

To assess your ability to closely analyse two texts (one from the shared texts studies; one selected independently), to draw comparisons between them, and develop a coherent argument in response to a self-formulated essay question.

**Description of assessment**

* After we have completed the study of our shared texts (prose, poetry, drama, and film) you choose an independent text with which to compare the original. If poetry is the choice for the initial text then the focus must be upon one poet and it will be likely that the study will need to be supplemented by additional poems by that poet. Connections between the texts could be made on the following basis:
  + work by the same author
  + a common theme, idea, or topic
  + the same or a contrasting historical or literary period (either of text production or setting)
  + work that is similar or different in form or medium
  + work from similar or different cultural perspectives
  + an interpretation from a particular critical perspective.
* It is often beneficial to choose texts of a different type so that variations in the stylistic features used may become a source of analysis. You are permitted to study novels, films, plays, collections of poetry (by a single poet) and short stories (by a single author), novellas and autobiographies.
* In consultation with the teacher you will then devise an essay question to which you draft and polish a response.
* The essay must be a comparison of the two texts.

**Assessment conditions**

A critical essay of up to a maximum of 1500 words that is word-processed, drafted and polished. This task is submitted to the SACE Board and marked externally.

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| *Assessment Design Criteria* |
| Knowledge and Understanding  KU1 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.  KU2 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  KU3 Knowledge and understanding of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types.  Analysis  An1 Analysis of ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  An2 Analysis and evaluation of ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the interpretation of texts.  An3 Analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  An4 Analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform interpretation.  Application  Ap1 Use of conventions, and stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Ap2 Use of evidence from texts to develop, support and justify responses.  Ap3 Use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression appropriate for purpose and audience. |

Performance Standards for Assessment Type 3: Comparative Text Study

|  | **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Analysis** | **Application** |
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| **A** | Detailed knowledge and understanding of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.  Thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Perceptive analysis of the ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  Perceptive analysis and evaluation of the complex ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the interpretation of texts.  Perceptive analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Perceptive analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Sophisticated use of a wide range of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Detailed and appropriate use of evidence from texts develop, support, and justify responses, with textual references incorporated fluently in discussion.  Use of precise and fluent expression, which is appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **B** | Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in most texts.  Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Knowledge and understanding of a range of stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Clear analysis of the ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  Clear analysis and evaluation of the complex ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.  Clear analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Clear analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Use of a range of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Appropriate use of evidence from texts to develop, support, and justify responses, with textual references incorporated in discussion.  Mostly accurate and fluent expression, which is appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **C** | Knowledge and understanding of some ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.  Knowledge and understanding of some ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Knowledge and understanding of some of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Some analysis of ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  Description, with some analysis and evaluation, of ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.  Description, with some analysis, of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Some analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Competent use of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Competent use of evidence from texts to develop, support, and justify responses, with some use of textual references in discussion.  Generally fluent and clear expression, which is mostly appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **D** | Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a narrow range of ways in which ideas and values are represented in texts.  Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a narrow range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a few of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Description of the ideas and values represented in texts.  Description of some ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.  Some description of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Recognition of some ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Use of some language features to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task in a limited way.  Some use of evidence from texts to develop, support , and attempt to justify responses, with use of a narrow range of textual references.  Occasionally clear expression, which is appropriate for some audiences and purposes. |
| **E** | Simplistic knowledge and very restricted understanding of the way in which an idea or a value is represented in a text.  Limited knowledge and restricted understanding of a restricted range of stylistic features used by authors.  Limited knowledge and restricted understanding of different text types and conventions. | Reference to an idea or value represented in a text.  Limited description of a way in which a stylistic feature is used to influence the reading of a text.  Simplistic description of a connection between texts in a comparative task.  Reference to a critical perspective. | Attempted use of some language features to create texts that attempt to address the meaning and intention of the task in a limited way.  Restricted use of evidence from texts to develop and support a simple response, with minimal textual references.  Emerging development of control of expression. |

**How do Anna Funder and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala portray the idea that 'people are products of their own time and place' in their texts *All that I am* and *Heat and Dust?***

Anna Funder's *All that I Am* and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust* both portray the idea that 'people are products of their own time and place'. Both texts develop this idea by exploring the phrase 'at certain times in history or places in the world, particular moral or political values would put the protagonist at risk'. This exploration then positions the reader to question life differences and decisions. Both authors also contrast the need for keeping one's values secret through the use of isolation and the experiences affecting life decisions that parallel another. Both authors are able to explore these distinctions of time and place, as well as moral and political values through the use of flashbacks, narrative structure sub plots showing the difference of characters and the comparison of extraordinary events and ordinary people.

The idea that 'People are products of their own time and place' explored through the affect given that at certain times in history or places in the world, particular moral or political values would put the protagonist at risk. In her text *Heat and Dust,* Jhabvala creates this abstract concept by structuring her text with a sub-plot that parallels the experiences of the two main characters, Olivia and the Narrator. Jhabvala shows the differences and similarities of time and place best when navigating the similar motion between characters, this can be shown when the Narrator follows each letter as a direction stating that it is not her story rather "it is Olivia's as far as I can follow it". The use of parallels is then turned as the relationship between these characters changes as both fall pregnant and, as a result, begin their contrary journey through their differences of both moral and political values. Similarly, Funder explores the differences of moral and political values within the same time in different places, using the two storylines of both Ruth and Ernst as they too parallel and contradict each other to the point of Toller's death and Ruth's exile "on condition that we were silent about the reason we needed it" years after their separation. Funder regularly compares the protagonist, Ruth, with the memories recollected by Toller in his auto biography, creating a similar subplot structure to that used in *Heat and Dust.* Both authors contrast this through differing storylines as Olivia tells both Douglas and the Nawab of her pregnancy. She admits "I was afraid", convincing each of the men to believe the child is theirs and creating risks for Olivia as she decides to stay with the Nawab after her miscarriage. In contrast, the Narrator politically decides not to tell Inder Lal about her pregnancy as the implications of her affair with a married man made her realize that she "was changing, becoming like everyone else". The reader then questions why "India always changes people" as the Narrator seeks to investigate why the time and place make everyday life choices unpredictable. Funder explores the idea 'people are products of their own time and place' as the reader is positioned to note th differences that historical events and eras have on the character. As Toller is leaving Nazi Germany forever, he notes that "in saying everything, one can reveal nothing", making readers question what is real and what is not. One technique the author uses to ensure this is evident, is through the structured use of chapters that tnove from Ruth to Toller and back again, as one story supports and gives background to the other, similar to the reliance of friends. The characters are then made to drift apart as Toller's background conflicts with his decisions based on political values and it becomes "clear he inhibited a different sphere". Funder creatively compares the encounters of both characters, by linking them through the character they both "had in common", Dora. Funder creates the character Dora to be the link between the two fiery protagonist-like characters, however, her death also causes them to fluctuate between drifting apart and thinking of each other This creates an underlying tone of irony as the reader is made to feel compassion for the characters as a result of their historical time and place affecting these relationships and parallels to show realistic companionship.

Both authors develop the concept of important life decisions and parallels between protagonists to convey the idea that 'People are products of their own time and place', however, they more importantly draw the reader to understand concepts like secrecy and isolation through life experience. Funder captures this through the use of both Ruth and Toller's flashbacks brought on by memories, creating isolation as the government restricts opinion and difference in pre-wartime Germany under the ruthless Hitler. Funder is then able to contradict this with light humour as she uses the comparisons of extraordinary events and ordinary people, writing "When Hitler came to power I was in the bath". In the same way, Jhabvala develops the palace in the mountains as a symbol of isolation. The characters Olivia and the Narrator scale the mountains to get away from Indian society and start fresh with each of their loved ones whose exclamations of "Oh how brave you are" reveal not only the courage but the desperation in their actions. With this, Jhabvala is able to demonstrate true secrecy. The mountains are also where both Olivia and the narrator's journeys end as they explore another area of life claiming "I don't know yet how long I shall stay". Both authors duplicate a true sense of irony and compassion for characters, through their representation of senses and the value placed upon them as they deteriorate for example, sight, fitness and youth. In *All That I Am,* the older Ruth sits and reads Toller's book describing it as "a vessel of memory in a world of forgetting". As the character Ruth settles down in her old age she recollects her hypothesis that "It is entirely possible to watch something happen and not to see it at all", as she recalls Hitler's rallies in the street below. Likewise, Jhabvala explores this by creating "the condition", affecting the narrator with her pregnancy, taking away ease of climbing the mountain and making it "more and more difficult to get down again, even if I should want to". The author creates the last contradiction in the narrator's life, the fact that this decision is one she cannot reconsider because she is limited by her condition, causing a sense of true irony, as well as a sense of isolation as she will be confined to the small town of X. This action shows the reader one of the many consequences of life's decisions affecting the character, as each author demonstrates the idea that 'people are products of their own time and place'.

Through secrecy and isolation of life experiences, both Funder and Jhabvala are able to highlight to the reader the consequences of life's decisions, both authors then are able to pinpoint the real difference between characters, reflecting the use of am rQ d welcoming and accepting origin to the reader as they are introduced to each character. Through this, the authors are able to strip away barriers defined by racial characteristics and narrow down 'what makes these characters human'. Each author draws reference from contrasting cultural backgrounds such as Germany, India and England, using the countries own authentic language to introduce the reader to a real sense of tradition and everyday life. "Toller had no small talk, no register for Bekannten", Bekannten meaning 'the known'. Both authors use this to create a welcoming and accepting origin for the reader as they are introduced to each character. The reader's first reaction may be the feeling of welcome, however some cultural traits are not acceptable as the authors' attempts to appeal to cultural discrepancies as well as "the Hindu fear of pollution" describing as they would go home and rigorously bath "over and over again". In contrast to this, Funder is able to unite through difference against the govermnent with Ruth's passionate and strong-willed nature to help in any way she can as "It made us feel we were betraying those we had left behind: Funder creates Ruth to be a pure hearted person who "does not remember one's own pain" but rather shows compassion and dedication, constantly worrying about others because "it is the suffering of others that undoes us". Similarly, Jhabvala's narrator in the beginning is more like Ruth, however, towards the end of the text she shows her intentions are narrowed to the safety of herself, for the sake of her child, leaving Inder Lal and scaling the mountains to settle in the town of X. Both authors are able to portray contrasting aspects to support the idea that 'People are products of their own time and place', reflecting upon what it is that makes the characters human, varying between individual and cultural traits.

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Funder's *All that I Am* and Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust* both portray the idea that 'people are products of their own time and place' through the use of narrative structure, sub-plots and flashbacks. Both texts develop the idea that at certain times in history or places in the world, particular moral or political values would put the protagonist at risk. This positions the reader to question the tum of events affecting life decisions and the impact of extraordinary events on ordinary people. Both authors also contrast the need for keeping ones values secret with the idea of isolation and its experiences.

Words:1,577

**Task:** **Comparative Text Study (*Heat and Dust* and *All That I Am*) (C+ grade)**

*Knowledge and Understanding*

* KU1: Some knowledge and understanding of ways that ideas are expressed. However, those ideas are not always clarified precisely and so the concept itself becomes vague and uncertain
* KU2: knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features (structure, subplots, contrast, characterisation, irony) – in fact this is often the strength of the essay.
* KU3: displays a grasp of the features of novels, and centres the argument on the similarities of the form

*Analysis*

* An1: the analysis of the ways in which ideas are presented is restricted because there is a lack of discipline in establishing the precision of those ideas. Confusing, convoluted sentences in which a range of ideas are muddled together prevent clarity.
* An2: clear analysis of the stylistic features adopted by both authors. There is a greater clarity in explaining what these features are (than in explaining the ideas – ironically!) and in exploring the effect that these stylistic choices have upon the reader. At times, however, because the concepts themselves have not been precisely communicated the role of the stylistic features in presenting these is also not clear.
* An3: a reasonable analysis of the similarities is embedded in the discussion, fewer differences are explored.

*Application*

* Ap2: competent use of evidence, particularly in exploring stylistic features. Since some concepts are not clear, the textual evidence used to justify these obscure points is also unclear…and sometimes just placed in sentences (rather than embedded into the line of reasoning).
* Ap3: At times the expression is fluent; at other times it is less well controlled. Run-on thoughts in sentences obscure the line of reasoning and the essay does need further editing and polishing.

*Overall*

This is an unusual essay for the strength is in the analysis of stylistic features, and the weakness is in the exploration of the thematic concerns. Imprecise expression leads to obscurity. Often this obscurity occurs in the topic sentences of paragraphs and this makes the overall line of reasoning quite difficult to follow. Yet at various points the student makes sensible, clear observations about the stylistic features of the two texts and does so in a comparative manner. At these points the evidence provided is useful, and the writing is more accessible.