English - annotated exemplar Level 3 AS91478 (A)

Respond critically to significant connections across texts, supported by evidence (3.7A)

Show: All English exemplars

See EXEMPLAR B for this standard

The following are generally extracts only from the completed student work. Note: students self-selected more than one text

Low Excellence

Commentary

Student response

Student 1 (PDF, 193KB)

To achieve this standard at Excellence, the student needs to respond critically and perceptively to significant connections across four texts, supported by evidence. This requires making sophisticated and insightful and/or original interpretations and judgements.

The student has chosen film noir as the text type:

... as I believe this clearly demonstrates issues prevalent at the time and societies response to them...

The student has established a significant connection:

... a stigma still remains towards the independent women which she believe(s) is completely unfair...

This is, as she concedes, even though society today has changed and improved in terms of women’s rights and gender equality... (1).

The student critically evaluates this connection in four sections, with each section evaluating a specific aspect of film noir’s portrayal of attitudes to women at the time. Two texts are evaluated in each section.

The first section provides convincing and informed interpretations, linking the texts to the context (1940s) and the connection:

Marlow refers to Helen as "that blonde chewing on my face" ... which completely takes away connotations of femininity towards her. Also, the unknown murderer,... which shows that Helen has taken on the characteristics of a man because she has too much power ...(2).
The paragraph concludes with a perceptive response, which integrates the informed interpretation shown in the evaluation of the two texts previously discussed:

The fact that both of these characters are ultimately murdered by men close to them sends a message that it is impossible for a women to be independent and powerful without being evil. ... reflects feelings towards women in the post war ... however, when the men returned their freedom and taste of independence was taken away ... however men quickly moved to quash the claims of these women and paint them as 'manipulative' and 'deceiving' (2).

The second section evaluates 'the perfect woman', where the relationship:

... acts as a metaphor for what is seen as the perfect relationship between a man and woman a woman should do everything for a man in order to make his life easy for him ...

The paragraph concludes with the discerning evaluation of attitudes of the time:

... It seems as though the societal view of this time was that a women could not be caring and loving without being less than a man. This idea still seems relevant in today's society where a stigma still remains against women who choose to live a more independent life, and focus on their careers as opposed to conforming to society and staying home to raise the children while the husband goes to work (3).

The third and fourth sections continue to provide discerning responses to the connection:

...This acts as a metaphor to show how there would ultimately be punishment for those who did not comply with the idealistic morals of 1940s America...

The student integrates wider issues, research and informed interpretation with personal insight:

This emphasises the idea that anyone could fall victim to death and destruction if they don’t follow society’s rules. ... reinforces the idea of punishment by society. ... reinforces the themes of punishment and moral ambiguity which are evident in the texts and forces us to examine our own actions and how they would be perceived in 1940s American society. ... or if it shows how the society of today has been corrupted and lost all important morals and values. If so, what does this mean for future generations and our relationships with one another? (4)

In summary, the student has:

- Linked the 4 texts to a significant connection (stigma against independent women).
- Used appropriate supporting evidence.
- Provided convincing, discerning critical response and some insightful (perceptive) discussion.

To meet Excellence more securely:

- In some instances, the comment could be supported with further detail (eg. end of paragraph 2).
- Some comments are introduced which need further development and/or linking (eg. existentialism, paragraph 4).
- Some comments, such as at the end of paragraph 3, lack the necessary sophistication and critical depth for Excellence.
The student has established a significant connection using 4 texts:

... the pitfalls of power and the way in which those who have it or who are searching for it are often so easily corrupted ... am not entirely sure our society is all that different to that of 30 years ago-some aspects of human nature have remained the same throughout history (1).

In the first section, the student makes informed interpretations about both Blade Runner and The Terminator in relation to the connection:

Cameron does this to make his audience think about their actions, and their potentially disastrous repercussions—...Scott presents a different, although equally disturbing, raft of possibilities.... (2).

A discerning judgement concludes this section:

Throughout the film, the audience is given hints which could point to our protagonist, Deckard, not being a human after all ... Scott makes the audience question the humanity of the protagonist, which imitates the paranoid nature of society at the time, where nothing was certain and everything was questionable.... (2)

The student makes an informed interpretation of the connection between attitudes in the 1980s and two texts early in the next section:

This idea is present in both Return of the Jedi and Blade Runner, in which people demonstrate a belief in the idea that if someone is different, then you automatically have the right to dislike them, to be afraid of them and to discriminate against them. ...

which is further developed with personal insight:

.... I find the idea that humans are capable of distancing themselves from such inhumane action, thereby not caring about the safety and wellbeing of the replicants, quite disturbing. This reflects on the way in which people who were different would have been treated during the 1980’s, although this would have been considerably less dramatic ...

and concludes with a link back to the connection:

... he is on their side, giving them quite an advantage, something which would have been seen by the audience as quite an appalling action, and of course, he is forced to suffer the repercussions of his actions... (3)

The critical response continues to be convincing and discerning:

The "greed is good" sentiment from the 1980’s is already quite obvious in Burke’s character, but Cameron used Ripley to further emphasise his flaws and the dangers of his greed and corruption. By contrast, Anakin was initially a good character, trying to protect the galaxy... (4).

... Ripley directly challenges the actions of the Company, a symbol of patriarchal oppression, represented by Burke, whose opinions she openly opposes. By comparison, almost all of the impressive feminist actions of the female protagonist of The Terminator ... (5).

Some points show insight (perception):

While the Company and Skynet embody patriarchy and oppression, the aliens and the terminator themselves are symbolic of the dangerous effects of a lack of equality, which Ripley and Sarah, respectively, eventually destroy. Both characters represent the third wave feminism notion that to achieve equality, across multiple factors, society must rid itself of all forms of oppression (5).

In summary, the student has:

• Linked the 4 texts to a significant connection (sameness of pitfalls of power, corruption).
• Used appropriate supporting evidence.
• Made convincing, informed and discerning interpretations and judgements.
• Provided some perceptive critical evaluation of the significant connection.

To meet Excellence:

• Some sections needed to be link more tightly to the connection (eg. feminism).
• Some sections need more sophistication in the evaluation (eg conservatism, end part of paragraph 3).
• Some comments needed to further develop/integrate context and text, eg. end of paragraph 2.

Low Merit
Commentary

Student response

Student 3 (PDF, 165KB)

To achieve this standard, the student needs to respond critically and convincingly to significant connections across texts, supported by evidence. This requires making discerning and informed interpretations and judgments about the significant connections.

The student has established a focus:

... the third wave of feminism which started in the 1980’s...

and from that developed a significant connection using 4 texts:

... female heroines should be more dominant or less oppressed by the opposite sex, that she should be able to make her own decisions. ... Lastly, the idea of equality for women to release the stereotypes from the previous decades and start being able to show that they can be just as good at something as men (1).

The first sections show some limited convincing critical response and judgements:

I find this is a perfect explanation of the third movement, because this is what women of that era wanted men to treat their wives like. That they are people, not some objects to dangle in front of guests and dress up ... (2).

...These films and real life show how women strive for power and throw off the male species, showing that they don’t need a man in their life to make them happy or a man to fight for them ... the roles in these films are reversed from the women needing the man stereotype, to the man being reliant on the female or the damsel in distress ... (3)

There are more discerning judgements made as the integration and the links become stronger in the next sections:

... Before the 1980’s the heroines in films would always be seen being protected by their male counterparts. In the 1980s this sort of stereotype was being ‘thrown out the window.’ (4)

... The stereotype of women always being the sidekick or damsel in distress has been reversed in this film, showing that women can also be the main hero and do not always have to stay on the sidelines ... (4)

... Jenna is not a powerhouse like woman like Sarah Connor in Terminator 2, but is more like a feminist hero who strives for freedom to make her own choices when it comes to her own life ... (5)

.... He can’t bear to be apart from her, that he can not be without her and needs her by his side-feminist film showing the male sex as a less dominant species. ... (5)

To not only try and change the views of the world, that women can do things that men can do ... show that women can stand at front and centre stage and be just as good, without having to open the waterworks often or relying on the men to do it for them... (5)
In summary, the student has:

- Linked the 4 texts to a significant connection (the third wave of feminism).
- Used appropriate supporting evidence.
- Made sufficient convincing, informed interpretations and judgements.
- Provided some discerning, critical evaluation of the significant connection.

To meet Merit more securely:

- The student could make further links/integration between the texts.
- Some sections move away from the topic.
- Some sections need to move from explanation and analysis (paragraphs 2 and 3) and develop stronger critical responses.

High Achieved

Commentary

Student response

Student 4 (PDF, 229KB)

To achieve this standard, the student needs to respond critically to significant connections across at least four texts, supported by evidence. This requires making evaluative interpretations and judgments about the significant connections.

The student has established a significant connection using 4 texts:

... that defined the [sic] this time like influences of social class, conflicts in family and relationships, ... the symbolism... and the effect of the mood and atmosphere...

Which is further clarified as:

... we are still affected by the past through repetitions of these ideas within actions and events in society today (1).

The student gives an example:

A prime example of this abuse of power is shown through the character of Lady Catherine from Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*... (2).

Then weighs up the findings and makes a judgement based on the analysis:

*Though I agree that a higher social class can have its advantages, it is more commonly shown in the form of wrongly corrupted power and pride and is used to blackmail, and pressure those of lower status ... (2).*

Then concludes the paragraph with a discerning judgement:

*However, from this confrontation we also learn of the consequences of the misuse of power and authority, as despite her sophistication and high rank, Lady Catherine’s arrogance and pride ruins her fine manners. Thus it is her that is seen as a more repulsive and disgraceful character by the audience, than Elizabeth whom Lady Catherine accuses of being so (2).*

The significant connection (the power of social class) continues to be interpreted and evaluated in the other texts, with the beginnings of discerning judgement evident:

*Social class was not only a representation of a person’s ranking or just an easier and beneficial lifestyle, it also outlined their background and relationships, tastes and education and most importantly, their future (3).*
...I think this shows us that like the Victorian times, people today can also become so fixated with their reputation and keeping up with changes that they go to the extremities to choose their social status over their virtues and compassion for friends and family (3).

...Catherine, many Victorians chose duty over love and marry for a high status and experience the clash of love and duty. This is also continued today through the form of arranged marriage as families use marriage only to strengthen their alliance (4).

...I think this reflects the state of the lower class people in society in the 1800s and their impression of the haughty and powerful upper class people and is shown even today as people become divided due to the difference in point of view and conflict between the behaviour of those of higher and lower class (5).

In summary, the student has:

- Linked the 4 texts to a significant connection, although this could be stated more succinctly.
- Used appropriate supporting evidence.
- Provided some convincing interpretations and judgments.
- Critically responded to the significant connection with some evaluative comments.

To reach Merit:

- Further integration is needed between texts.
- The focus of the connection needs to be tightened.

Low Achieved
Commentary

To achieve this standard, the student needs to respond critically to significant connections across at least four texts, supported by evidence. This requires making evaluative interpretations and judgements about the significant connections.

The student has established a significant connection:

The relationships between blacks and whites (1).

The student has established a critical stance to the texts and their authors:

This shows that the campaign had such an effect on the author that she wrote in such a way that we feel she treats blacks as equals (2).

...This description of the historical event from the point of view of a black woman who knew him shows the effect this death had on the author; she tries to imagine the effect of this shooting on the community in which he lived (3).

Sufficient judgements are made:

Throughout the texts To Kill a Mockingbird and The Help, we learn that the Black Civil Rights Campaign and racism in the community has had a great effect on the authors, and this in turn has affected their writing and the way they discuss blacks in the texts (2).

...By making it seem usual, she makes the audience think about our surroundings in modern day society (3).

Sufficient reference and critical response to the significant connection in all four texts is made. For example:
(Colour Purple) ... This shows that the relationships between blacks and whites were very tense due to the white's opinion that they were above blacks. This relates to the context of 1960s America because the view that whites were above blacks and that they were able to beat them without consequences was common throughout America (3).

(The Help) ... This also shows that violence was very common in the 1960s, not only by whites towards blacks but also within black families. This influenced the authors to address violence in their writing (4).

Some integration and interpretation of the connection across the texts is provided: Although, unlike in The Color Purple, she does not accept that this is okay, she does not fight against the abuse [The Help] (4).

In summary, the student has:

- Linked the 4 texts to a significant connection.
- Used appropriate supporting evidence.
- Given some interpretations of the relationship between blacks and whites in this period.
- Begun to make some critical responses in the form of judgements.

To meet Achieved more securely:

- The student needs to more clearly link and focus on the significant connection at times. For example, the gender discussion: we learn that the women stayed in the home and looked after the children and the men worked. A woman’s only job was to run the house and look after the children (5).
- More specific examples are sometimes required. For example: This shows that the campaign had such an effect on the author that she wrote in such a way that we feel she treats blacks as equals (2).
- More focus on making discerning judgements. Response is sometimes repetitive rather than selective: This shows that whites were not only violent towards blacks, ... not only by whites towards blacks but also within black families ... This also shows that violence was very common in the 1960s (4).

High Not Achieved

Commentary

Student response

To achieve this standard, the student needs to respond critically to significant connections across at least four texts, supported by evidence. This requires making evaluative interpretations and judgments about the significant connections.

The student has established a concern:

... the consequences of right or wrong actions made in the past are affecting the modern way of living.

and established a significant connection:

... choices made by the characters in these novels have reflected the influence of Utilitarianism upon the wider society of today (1).

The significant connection is further explained:

People are always searching for better ways to obtain possessions, however not everything they want goes according to their desires and plans

and linked to the selected texts:
... the characters are faced with challenges, some more related to today than others, however all are aiming for the pleasure of achieving well (1).

The significant connection is explained, with a loose judgement, in relation to *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Three Musketeers*. There is an attempt at interpretation, with reference to various published criticisms (not referenced):

"When one loves, one always believes in love" as an example is an obvious recognition of the desire for love and overall happiness within that love, even if it means going against what is seen as acceptable ... to rebel within the human psyche (2).

The discussion of the conflict between Darwin and Christianity is loosely, but not clearly, linked to the challenges facing the characters at the time:

*God is seen as the true love, therefore by questioning the beliefs of creation and the rise of Christ, what the Utilitarianism philosophers see the wrong action is being carried out as these theories reduced the happiness of the society* (3).

Attempts at a judgement are made:

*A message that has heavily impacted today’s society by the consequences of what was seen as the wrong choices at the time they were made. It reduced the overall happiness which the utilitarian philosophers knew would happen* (3).

The links between *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* and the utilitarian philosophy (significant connection) are not always clear:

*Despite the fact that Darwin withdrew from his evolution theory, the consequences of making them public are still around today. The white rabbit from The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland is represented through an extended metaphor of time. Alice’s journey is heavily influenced by time as time is what she is chasing. "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!" shows us the consequences of chasing time. The many theories that came about in the 1800’s are near to impossible to remove. It is a pointless act to chase time as the consequences of the wrong actions are too large* (4).

A tenuous connection is clearer at the end of the paragraph:

*Is this creating the happiness that the utilitarian philosophers had in mind?* (4).

In summary, the student has:

- Linked the 4 texts to a significant connection.
- Used appropriate supporting evidence.
- Given some interpretations of the Utilitarian philosophy as linked to the texts.
- Begun to make some critical judgments.

To achieve the standard:

- The student needs to more clearly identify, establish and interpret the significant connection linking all texts.
- The connection focus needs to be clearly sustained throughout.
- All quotations must be referenced.