

91472



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SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY

## Level 3 English, 2016

### 91472 Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence

2.00 p.m. Tuesday 22 November 2016  
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.	Respond critically and convincingly to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.	Respond critically and perceptively to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**Write ONE essay in this booklet.**

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

**Achievement**

**TOTAL**

**A4**

ASSESSOR'S USE ONLY

You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 1000 words. Quality of writing is more important than the length of your essay.

In your essay, discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement by making a case for your position.

Begin your written text(s) essay here:

Statement number: 5

The most important texts are those which criticise the present. In the text ~~the~~ The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood takes this further, criticising ~~our~~ both past and present, along ~~with~~ with her vision of our possible future. Through this criticism we as the reader are confronted with ~~both~~ contrasting hope and despair for both our present and future. The society of Gilead in the text, while set in the future, ~~is~~ contains many clear parallels to and elements of ~~our~~ society as we experience it, while also exposing the parts which we close our eyes to. Oppression and control are clear features of Gileadean society, and the psychological effects of this shown in the text are a criticism of what we accept as normal in our present society.

In this text Margaret Atwood

uses events and ideas from our past to create what she believes is a possible, or even probable, future, based on present society. Atwood has often said that "There is nothing in [The Handmaid's Tale] that has not happened before." This creates a familiarity for the reader, allowing us to apply the events in the text to our own present, meaning we can identify how ideas and criticisms in the text relate to our experience of society. This is important, as being able to relate Atwood's vision of our future to our own present means we may be able to acknowledge and rectify the things in our society which could lead to a similar eventuality.

Atwood criticises the things in our society that accept and dismiss as ordinary and normal by ~~presenting~~ presenting them in an extreme form. An example of this is the treatment of women in the society of Gilead. In Gilead, women are given no rights or freedom, and are merely considered

as 'breeding machines'. If a woman ~~is~~ disobeys any of the multitude of rules imposed on her she faces either execution or being sent to the 'colonies' - barren toxic wastelands. Aunt Lydia, a woman employed by the state to indoctrinate young women, ~~to~~ says "Ordinary is what you are used to. This does not seem ordinary but in time it will. It will become ordinary." In our present society women are not oppressed in such a severe and overt manner, but they are generally not treated equally to men. Women ~~do~~ do face abuse and are at a disadvantage to men. The Handmaid's ~~Tale~~ Tale takes this to an extreme where ~~it~~ women cannot even legally own property. This forces the reader to acknowledge this is not merely a plot device in the novel, but also an ~~is~~ issue in our present.

~~The~~ The society of Gilead in the text operates ~~to~~ through the oppression and control of its ~~citizens~~ citizens. The extreme nature of the oppression faced by those in Gilead, coupled with the familiarity of the

text's setting, forces us as readers to examine and acknowledge the role of state power and control in our own present. Like the characters in the text, we are often given the illusion of freedom and free choice, while really being confined to a narrow set of choices and being expected to conform to prevailing ideas of normalcy. In ~~the~~ *The Handmaid's Tale* Atwood takes this further with extreme oppression in an almost omnipotent or god-like state. Citizens have very little freedom or power over their own lives, while still being told they are ~~free~~ 'free'. "There is more than one kind of freedom; freedom to, and freedom from. In the days of anarchy it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underestimate it." Through the course of the text we see the main character internalise this dogma and slowly become less resistant and more accepting of the oppressive society in which she lives. This causes the reader to question to what extent they accept oppression and lack of freedom as merely 'freedom from' rather than 'freedom to'.

Atwood presents us with a startling, yet familiar vision of what our ~~pre~~ present could become. ~~Her~~ Her criticism of our present and past, and what we accept as 'normal' forces us to acknowledge and confront issues and injustices in our own society ~~to~~ to which we might otherwise turn a blind eye. Criticism of the present makes this text important as it opens the eyes of the reader to a disturbing yet plausible ~~unpleasant~~ consequence of our actions.

Achievement exemplar 2016

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Standard:</b>	<b>91472</b>	<b>Total score:</b>	<b>A4</b>
<b>Q</b>	<b>Grade score</b>	<b>Annotation</b>			
5	A4	<p>“The Handmaid’s Tale”</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of statement and of the text itself, and addresses the statement with some specific evidence.</p> <p>Focuses on the statement and keeps to it all the way through. The argument is clear and concise. The approach to the text and the discussion itself is fairly generalised and mostly superficial – it needed to demonstrate a depth of knowledge of the writer’s crafting and a greater critical awareness to reach Merit.</p>			