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91473



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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 3 English 2025

91473 Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), supported by evidence

Credits: Four

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

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

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

Do not write in the margins (//////). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

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

Excellence

TOTAL 07

VISUAL OR ORAL TEXTS

INSTRUCTIONS

Write an essay on at least ONE **visual or oral text** that you have studied, in response to ONE of the statements below.

Discuss the extent to which you agree with your chosen statement. Respond critically to the statement by making a close analysis of the text(s).

STATEMENTS (Choose ONE)

1. Key moments become engaging through the director's / creator's skill.
2. The interesting use of time challenges our understanding of the world.
3. Characters who change for the better teach us much about human nature.
4. Captivating settings reveal important things about society.
5. The results of conflict communicate the director's / creator's ideas.
6. The skilful combination of sound and vision reveals a text's main message.
7. Unusual relationships provide insight for the audience.
8. Convincing villains give us a deeper understanding of what it is to be human.

TEXT DETAILS

Visual / oral text type	<input type="text" value="Film"/>	Visual / oral text type	<input type="text"/>
Title	<input type="text" value="Parasite"/>	Title	<input type="text"/>
Director / creator	<input type="text" value="Bong Joon-Ho"/>	Director / creator	<input type="text"/>

SELECTED QUESTION

Copy and paste the question you have chosen into the space below.

PLANNING

final level of social decay
poverty corrodes dignity
cansee it but always underneath it

ESSAY

Type your essay in the space below. You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 800–900 words. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay. (The counter will change colour when you reach the recommended word count.)

In your essay, discuss the extent to which you agree with your chosen statement. Respond critically to the statement by making a close analysis of the text(s).

B *I* U     

Captivating settings reveal important things about society.

Bong Joon-Ho's *Parasites* is a 2019 award-winning thriller that peels back the layers of modern Seoul to highlight the corrupt economic hierarchy that riddles society. Joon-Ho uses the captivating settings of his film to portray the message "Wealth is elevated while poverty is buried" in both its metaphorical and literal meanings. This film targets and exposes the shelter and the blind eye people with higher wealth have from those in poverty, and exaggerates how literal the blind eye can get.

P1

Bong Joon-Ho uses the settings of this film, specifically the families' homes, to showcase the parallels between the poor working class and the upper class. The Kims' house is the first setting we see in *Parasite*, a downwards panning shot showing a long, thin, dirty window down to a Father and Son sitting on the floor, complaining that the neighbour's Wi-Fi has gone down, meaning they can't use it. The use of the panning shot emphasises the Kims' semi-basement home as they are living below the surface of their scrappy town. The next scene shows Jessica, the sister, sitting hunched over so as not to touch the ceiling because the home's toilet is elevated in the bathroom. Immediately, the audience can see the untraditional design of the Kims' home and the small, cluttered environment shows their below-average wealth. Bong making the toilet being the highest place in the house is an almost funny way to represent 'Wealth is elevated and poverty is buried' as the Kims have so little, the most high and 'wealthy' thing to their name is their toilet. The half-window first shown in the film not only shows the Kims' lack of natural light or fresh air but also represents their 'half-place' in society. Bong uses this window to represent how society sees the Kims and their lack of visibility within our world. From the Kims' perspective, they can always see an 'out', see the wealthy, see out from their poverty, but are always stuck underneath it. We never see the window open, representing how society has locked those in poverty away, making it inescapable for those struck with it, until there is a city-wide fumigation and Mr Kim tells Jessica to open the window for "Free pest control". The Kims' willingness to inhale poison to make their lives more convenient reveals how Bong is using the overwhelming poverty setting to show how poverty corrodes dignity within people. Bong's use of setting to display their half place in society is his way of making the audience feel like the Kims are the parasites; they live half underground, meaning they aren't seen unless people know they are there. Bong shows this again when a drunk civilian urinates on their window, mistaking it for a gutter. This filthy introduction to the second main setting of the movie, the Kims' semi-basement, is meant to make the audience uncomfortable. Bong uses the long panning shots to show the cramped, tight feeling of the home and really show how poverty struck the Kims truly are. These techniques are shown again when Bong reveals Moon-Guang and Guane-sae living in the cellar of the Parks' mansion. The long panning shot down the dark, wet stairs to reveal Guane-sae was made to show the final level of social decay, complete disappearance under the wealthy. Poverty is buried.

P2

The striking differences in class and wealth are really shown when Bong introduces us to the Park family and their mansion. It begins with a montage of Ki-woo walking up to the Park home, low shots angled up exaggerate the height at which he's having to climb towards this mansion. The shots are all bathed with natural light and sun beams crossing him as he's walking, the polar opposite of which is the Kims' semi-basement is shown. The large glass walls of the Park mansion may look like a stylistic choice, but Bong uses this captivating wealth to display the Parks' freedom. Mrs Park is displayed as a ditsy character floating around her mansion all day waiting for Mr Park to return. When her son creates a piece of art that is no better than what any other seven-year-

old could make, she exclaims that "my son is an artistic genius!" while framed in front of big glass walls that look out onto their lawn. Bong uses her placement in the setting to represent this freedom and isolation Mrs Park has from the world. Her innocence radiates as she has been isolated from a lot of the hardships of the world. The big glass box at the top of a hill the Parks live in was a way Bong used to show how they can be seen by everyone, but their tall fences and isolation mean they are unable to see what's below them. Their elevated house lets them not see what's below them, as they have everything they need at the top. The problematic innocence the Parks have over them can again be portrayed when Bong creates a rainstorm that hits both the Kims and the Parks' houses. This can be seen as a way Bong used to remind the audience that they are still in the same city and to rub in how truly different lives they live while living decently close. The rainstorm starts, and Bong shows the Park family watching in awe as the raindrops catch the light at sunset. "It's so refreshing!" said Mrs Park just before cutting to the Kim family walking home through the dramatic rainstorm. Bong then uses cross-cutting of scenes to show the Kims fighting for their house as it is flooding, being drenched, and their toilet exploding because of the sewage flooding, to peaceful Mr and Mrs Park sleeping on the couch, enjoying the rain sounds. Bong uses the rain to show the impact of both settings facing the same rain in a juxtaposing way. Bong uses Mrs Park to describe the rain as refreshing while standing in her mansion, and having the Kims run home during the same rainstorm to a flooded house shows how blind and ignorant Bong wanted to display the wealthy. This 'Blind' family can't even see a man is living in their cellar because of his poverty.

P3

The wealthy can only be sound when they are blind to the structures that create them. The parallels of each house tell exactly how big their economic gaps are, but Bong also uses subtle scenes to show the geographical distance between the two families. Very long walking scenes between both the houses, vast sun-filled shots of the neighbourhood setting the Parks live in slowly turning into dingy night when the Kims get closer to town, make for a captivating scene change, really showing how vastly different not only to the Kims live from the Parks, but everyone surrounding the Kims too. These exaggerated scenes could be taken as unnecessary to the plot, but the setting is so important in Bong's style of this film to drive the 'Wealth is elevated while poverty is buried'. It is meant to make you uncomfortable when you see the Kims and their neighbours scooping water out from their semi-basements frantically during the flood, or when Guane-sae is seen creeping around the Parks' house for food. Seeing dirty, creepy Guane-sae walking through the Parks' pristine kitchen is meant to make you question why it makes you uncomfortable. It is not his fault, he's been forced into such poverty, he's stuck in the cellar of some family's house. Bong's intentional use of making Guane-sae look so out of place in the kitchen, but look fitting for his cellar, eating leftovers, represents how strict the boundary Bong wanted to portray for being wealthy. How much can one stick out for not being wealthy, even if he's just standing in a kitchen?

Parasite relies on setting to shove 'dark message down the viewers' throats in order to show truly how real the Kims' lifestyle is. To some, the Kims' house may seem extremely over the top and exaggerated, while to others, it is their reality. Bong uses the settings of Parasite to reveal how blind society can be to those struggling, especially if the wealthy don't bother to look at what's below them. Wealth is glorified and always uplifted, while poverty is almost unescapable and a deep hole in our society, something Bong truly highlights through this film. It makes you question, who is the real Parasite?

1412 WORDS / 900 RECOMMENDED

Excellence

Subject: English

Standard: 91473

Total score: 07

Grade score	Marker commentary
E7	<p>This response is focused on the way the director has set up a comparison between two settings in order to point at the wealth gap and its ramifications. There are moments of perception such as the comments made on audience discomfort at the strictness of the line between rich and poor.</p> <p>A higher score would be supported by further discussion of the systemic aspects of poverty under critique, perhaps utilising further the idea of blindness which is mentioned.</p>