

IB Language and Literature, Year 2 Summer Assignment 2016

Text: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood

Assignment: One essay, one passage annotation, one dialectical journal entry

Questions: Email lgenesky@wcpss.net.

During Year 2 of the course, you will further develop close reading skills and understand the importance and influence of context when studying any work. You will also explore some of the major themes found in literature. During the first part of this year, we will explore literary works in detail; analyze elements such as theme and the ethical stance or moral values of literary texts; and understand and make appropriate use of literary terms. **Our first text is *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, which builds on many of the topics (gender, community, power) that you studied during Year 1 and is similar to Orwell's *1984*, but has an interesting narrative structure and constructs a dystopia in a way that we as readers are not used to or with which we may not be always comfortable.**

After reading *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (**find background information and additional support here:** <http://thehandmaidstalereview.blogspot.com/>), you will write one essay based on a previous IB Language A Paper 2 assessments question. You will also complete one passage annotation and one dialectical journal entry.

***Hard copies of the essay, passage annotation, and dialectical journal entry are due on the first day of school (AUGUST 29th) ***

****Please be sure to bring your copy of the novel to class- we will use it for the first three weeks****

PART I) Analysis Essay: Your essay should be 3-4 pages, typed in size 12 Times New Roman font, and double-spaced. Avoid writing in first or second person. Organize your thoughts logically and adhere to the standards of spelling and grammar. Your essay should include internal citations (that means use evidence from the text to support your claims!) and a works cited page. Use MLA conventions. Follow the IB rubric on the last page (**Note: the Paper 2 rubric is different from the Paper 1 rubric used during Year 1 of the course**).

*****Be sure you answer the question(s) asked!*****

Essay Options (choose one):

1. Many works of literature seem to have depressing themes or stories, but there are often moments of innocence and hope within these works. How does Atwood present these moments and with what effect?
2. Protest against authority can take many forms. How is protest presented in this work?
3. How is the role of the individual in society presented in this work?
4. How are different social classes presented in this work and what does this reflect about the author's own backgrounds?
5. How is the abuse of power shown in this work? How does the writer encourage the reader to respond to this theme?
6. Show how belief or faith is represented in this literary work and discuss how this aspect might be interpreted or understood in different historical, cultural or social contexts.
7. In what ways is the reader seduced or comforted by the ideas in the work and in what ways challenged or alienated?

PART II) Passage Annotation: Choose a significant passage from the novel (somewhere around a page in length). Photocopy that page and thoroughly annotate the text (mark your notes on the photocopied page).

****NOTE: The passages used for PART II and for PART III should be different****

PART III) Dialectical journal: A dialectical journal is a conversation between you and what you are reading. You simply write down **passages** that make you think or interest you and write about **your thoughts**. This process is an important way to understand a piece of literature. By writing about literature, you make your own meaning of the work in order to truly understand it. When you do this yourself, then the text belongs to you. You have made it yours. The passages are there for everyone to read; however, the connections and interpretations are uniquely yours. You are neither right nor wrong in your response. Be willing to take intellectual risks and be honest.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of developing the ability to think critically, and this assignment will assist you in developing analytical skills that will serve you at the university level...it will also prove beneficial as you prepare for the IOC (individual oral commentary) in February/March.

Below are the minimum requirements and general format for your journal entry (remember there are three requirements in one entry):

Date, literary text and author heading

Chapter number, if applicable

1. Cite one interesting passage and explain what interests you about it in terms of plot/theme. Cite the page number MLA style in parentheses at the end of the passage. If it is a particularly long, passage, you may abbreviate it with ellipses. Ex: "Because I liked you too fixedly and thoroughly... looked up at me with human eyes and cursed me in a man's voice" (Brontë 275). Discuss what is interesting about the passage, examine the author's representation of the events, or reflect on the character(s)' thoughts/actions.
2. Style—Cite one example of the author's style (including page number) and reflect on why that stylistic choice is significant to the text. See the elements of style checklist below. Stylistic choices should vary, but you may notice patterns that you wish to track.
3. Question selected and response- For each chapter assignment, select one of the questions below to respond to. Be sure to record the question in its entirety and provide a strong response.
 1. How could the passage be read and interpreted differently by two different readers?
 2. If the passage had been written in a different time or place or language or for a different audience, how and why might it differ?
 3. How and why is a social group represented in a particular way in the passage?
 4. Which social groups are marginalized, excluded or silenced within the passage?
 5. How does the passage conform to, or deviate from, the conventions of a particular genre, and for what purpose? *Think about within the larger text of the novel*
 6. How has the passage borrowed from other texts, and with what effects? *You may think about the passage in regards to the larger text, or in relation to other texts studied or read*
4. Length—Each journal entry should be approximately **two** pages handwritten (**however, I would expect that an entry of a critical reader would be longer**). Anything less is simply unacceptable.

Checklist: Elements of Literary Style

- 1. Sentence Structure** Are the sentences long or short? Why do they change?
Do they contain many subordinate clauses, or are they often fragments?
Are there any digressions or interruptions?
Is the word-order straightforward or unconventionally crafted?
- 2. Pace** Is the writing heavily descriptive, with emphasis on setting and atmosphere, or does it focus on action and plot movement?
- 3. Expansive/Economical Diction** Is the writing tight and efficient, or elaborate and long-winded?
When does the author use one or the other mode, and why?
- 4. Vocabulary** Are the words simple or fancy? Are they technical, flowery, colloquial, cerebral, punning, obscure (and so on...)?
- 5. Figures of speech** Are there any metaphors, similes, or symbols?
Are there any other uses of figurative language (personification, metonymy, and so on)?
- 6. Use of Dialogue** How often does dialogue tell the story?
Do we see whole conversations or just fragments?
Does the conversation use slang or is it formal? Does it appear natural or contrived?
Does the dialogue give a sense of pacing, of pauses, of the unsaid?
How much does it substitute for narration?
- 7. Point of View** Possibilities: first, second, third, omniscient, limited omniscient, multiple, inanimate, free indirect discourse.
- 8. Character development** How does the author introduce characters, and how do we see their evolution in the story? What is their function and motivation?
What kinds of characters are they? Full/round? Stock characters? Stereotypes? Caricatures?
- 9. Tone** What is the author's attitude? What is the mood of the story?
Does the author seem sarcastic? Aggressive? Wistful? Pessimistic? In

love? Philosophically detached? Hopeful? Ironic? Bitter? (And so on...)

Whatever the tone, where is it visible in the narrative?

10. Word Color, Word Sound How much does the language call attention to or depend on the quality of its sound, e.g. through alliteration, assonance, consonance, dissonance, rhythm, unusual word choice, and so on?

11. Paragraph / Chapter Structure Are paragraphs very short, or are they enormous blocks running across many pages?

Are the chapters short or long? How many are there, how are they organized, and why is this important?

12. Time Sequencing / Chronology How has the author organized the chronology of events? To what effect? What is the work's structural "rhythm"?

13. Allusions How and how often does the author refer to other texts, myths, symbols, famous figures, historical events, quotations, and so on?

14. Experimentation in Language Are there any unusual techniques, such as stream-of-consciousness, mixing styles and genres, unusual layout on the page, breaking rules of grammar and form, odd or unstable narrative perspectives, onomatopoeia, and so on?

15. Metafictional techniques Does the author call attention to his or her own process of narration?

Are the narrator's position, role, and thoughts as a storyteller mentioned explicitly in the text? What function does this serve?

Paper 2: Essay (HL)

Criterion A: Knowledge and understanding

- How much knowledge and understanding of the part 3 works and their context has the student demonstrated in relation to the question answered?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little knowledge is shown of the part 3 works and the way context affects their meaning.
2	Knowledge of the part 3 works and the way context affects their meaning is sometimes illustrated; understanding is superficial.
3	Knowledge of the part 3 works and the way context affects their meaning is adequately illustrated; understanding is satisfactory.
4	Knowledge of the part 3 works and the way context affects their meaning is pertinently illustrated and the understanding shown is good.
5	Knowledge of the part 3 works and the way context affects their meaning is thoroughly and persuasively illustrated and the understanding shown is perceptive.

Criterion B: Response to the question

- To what extent is an understanding of the expectations of the question shown?
- How relevant is the response to these expectations, and how far does it show critical analysis?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little awareness of the expectations of the question.
2	There is some awareness of the expectations of the question; the response is only partly relevant and is mostly unsubstantiated generalization.
3	There is adequate awareness of the expectations of the question; the response is generally relevant and critical.
4	There is good understanding of the expectations and some of the subtleties of the question; the response is consistently relevant and critical.
5	There is excellent understanding of the expectations and many of the subtleties of the question; the response is relevant, focused and insightful.

Criterion C: Understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features

- To what extent does the essay show awareness of how the writer's choices of the stylistic features in the texts (for example, characterization, setting, theme, narrative point of view, structure, style and technique) are used to construct meaning?
- To what extent does the essay show understanding of the effects of stylistic features?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is limited awareness or illustration of the use of stylistic features.
2	There is some awareness and illustration of the use of stylistic features, with limited understanding of their effects.
3	There is adequate awareness and illustration of the use of stylistic features, with adequate understanding of their effects.
4	There is good awareness and illustration of the use of stylistic features, with good understanding of their effects.
5	There is excellent awareness and illustration of the use of stylistic features, with very good understanding of their effects.

Criterion D: Organization and development

- How logical and developed is the argument of the essay?
- How coherent and effective is the formal structure of the essay?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little focus, structure, sequencing of ideas and development.
2	There is some focus, structure, sequencing of ideas and development.
3	There is adequate focus, structure, sequencing of ideas and development.
4	There is good focus and structure, with a logical sequence and development.
5	There is precise focus and excellent structure; the work is coherently sequenced and thoroughly developed.

Criterion E: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register, style and terminology? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the student's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the task.)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.