IAL Literature Unit 3
Prose Exemplar Pack

Please use the Teaching Notes alongside this document for a comprehensive guide.

Taken and adapted from:

http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/English%20Literature/2015/teaching-and-learning-materials/Prose_exemplars_pack.pdf ['Exemplar Responses: A level paper 2 (Prose)'; Responses A & B]

http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/International%20Advanced%20Level/english-literature/2015/specification-and-sample-assessments/IAL-English-Literature-Collation-SAM.pdf [Prompts to IC and use of marking grid]

http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/English%20Literature/2015/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/A-level-Literature-SAM.pdf [Original questions, prompts to IC]

Themes and texts: Women and Society- Woolf and Bronte

Question 1: Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts make use of different voices. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors

Exemplar Response 1

In both Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and Virginia Wolfe's novel *Mrs Dalloway*, the writers employ the technique of narrative voice in order to give considerably marginalised characters a voice, providing them with a sense of liberation and freedom that they do not receive in their respective restrictive societies. In *Wuthering Heights*, narrative voice is portrayed through the two characters of Nelly, whose narration is mainly oral and Lockwood, whose journal actually forms the frame of the novel. Whereas in *Mrs Dalloway*, the narrator is omniscient, although there are continual changes in the points of view throughout the novel.

In *Mrs Dalloway*, the notion of being told a story from the narrator's point of view is extremely important to the narrative as a whole. Due to the omniscient, third person narrator, the narrative does not permit the readers to ever gain the full truth of the novel. Thus the readers are completely reliant on the few bits of information that we receive from the narrator to form a judgement on the characters, which we subconsciously assume to be reality, yet this is a fickle assumption. This narrative style prevents the readers from forming a subjective view of the characters. The character of Peter, is undermined from the start of the novel, and the reader receives the least information about him. It is important to highlight that the denial of information is deliberate by Wolfe, for the purpose of highlighting the mystery and secrecy concerning Daisy. In contrast, in *Wuthering Heights*, the narrative voice is used explicitly for the purpose of enabling the readers to form objective opinions concerning the characters as we receive insights not only to the plot, but also the characters themselves. This allows the readers to focus on the narrative plot, and much less of the characters themselves in order for the narrative to express the truth, as this portrayal of reality is not discredited by judgements made by the readers.

It is also important to highlight that in *Mrs Dalloway,* Wolfe chooses to follow the narrative structure of the stream of consciousness in order to mimic the theme of wandering thoughts. This creates a sense of intimacy between both the readers and the characters, as the readers feel as though we have a greater access to the 'true' character despite the constant changing points of view. This stream of consciousness also provides the characters with a sense of freedom, they can express themselves fully without being hindered. Whereas in *Wuthering Heights*, Bronte chooses a non-linear narrative structure, providing the readers with both flashbacks and flash-forwards, in order to encompass the readers in the plot, adding to the sense of the meandering of thoughts.

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In Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* the narrative voice is not used to give the characters freedom. In fact it can be argued that the characters are restricted by the narrative form as it denies the voice of Nelly, as the purpose of the text is not to give the author a voice, but to give the text a voice, telling the story without any involvement from the narrator.
In spite of this it can also be argued, that whilst Nelly has no obvious voice within the novel, the fact that she is a character within her narrative does give her a voice as she participates in the story. It is also important to highlight the importance of the narrative voice of Lockwood. The narrative form of the diary, allows the readers to see the events of the plot from a first-hand perspective, thus creating a sense of closeness between the author and the readers. Similar to Nelly, this narrative form gives Lockwood who is limited in the fact that he is an outsider, a sense of liberation as he is free to express himself openly. This is also echoed in Wolfe's *Mrs Dalloway.*

In conclusion it can be argued that both Virginia Wolfe in *Mrs Dalloway* and Emily Bronte in *Wuthering Heights*, employ the use of narrative for a variety of reasons. Both writers aim to give the narrators who are constrained a sense of freedom and liberation from their restrictive societies. *Wuthering Heights* aims to force the readers to rely on their imaginations to aid the plot whereas in *Mrs Dalloway* the readers rely heavily on the information we are given and are not given permission to employ their thought which gives sole focus to the narrative.

First Marker's comments:

Sophisticated argument but barely any textual examples used. Also, there's limited acknowledgement of context.

Second Marker

Review the response in the light of the first marker's comments and make your own notes on a separate sheet showing how the response itself covers the following areas:

How does the script cover key areas:	Woolf	Bronte
e.g Use of narrators - reliable?		
e.g Different voices		
e.g		
e.g		
e.g		
e.g		
Contexts: type and how revealed		

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What overall mark and level would you award the script? Why?

Level	Mark	AO1 = bullet point 1	A02 = bullet point 2	AO3 = bullet point 3, 4	AO4 = bullet point 5, 6
	0	No rewardable material			
Level 1	1-6	**Descriptive** • Makes little reference to texts with limited organisation of ideas. Limited use of appropriate concepts and terminology with frequent errors and lapses of expression. • Uses a narrative or descriptive approach that shows limited knowledge of texts and how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows a lack of understanding of the writer's craft. • Shows limited awareness of contextual factors. • Shows limited awareness of links between texts and contexts. • Demonstrates limited awareness of connections between texts. • Describes the texts as separate entities.			
Level 2	7-12	**General understanding/exploration** • Makes general points, identifying some literary techniques with general explanation of effects. Aware of some appropriate concepts and terminology. Organises and expresses ideas with clarity, although still has errors and lapses. • Gives surface readings of texts relating to how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows general understanding by commenting on straightforward elements of the writer's craft. • Has general awareness of the significance and influence of contectual factors. • Makes general connections between texts. • Makes general cross-references between texts.			
Level 3	13-18	**Clear relevant application/exploration** • Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression. • Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped in texts with consistent analysis. Shows clear understanding of the writer's craft. • Demonstrates a clear exploration of the significance and influence of contextual factors. • Develops relevant links between texts. • Develops an integrated approach with clear examples.			
Level 4	19-24	**Discriminating controlled application/exploration** • Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language. • Demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts. Analyses, in a controlled way, the nuances and subtleties of the writer's craft. Provides a discriminating analysis of the significance and influence of contextual factors. • Makes detailed links between texts and contexts. • Analyses connections between texts. • Takes a controlled discriminating approach to integration with detailed examples.			

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Level 5	25-30	**Critical and evaluative** • Presents a critical evaluative argument with sustained textual examples. Evaluates the effects of literary features with sophisticated use of concepts and terminology. Uses sophisticated structure and expression. • Exhibits a critical evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped in texts. Displays a sophisticated understanding of the writer's craft. • Presents a sophisticated evaluation and appreciation of the significance and influence of contextual factors. • Makes sophisticated links between texts and contexts. • Evaluates connections between texts. • Exhibits a sophisticated connective approach with sophisticated use of examples.

Themes and texts: Science and Society- Shelley and Atwood

Question 2: Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts use the narrators in their works. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Exemplar Response 2

Throughout the female dystopian novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, Atwood makes use of her narrators to present how the patriarchy abuse their power so they can live in a utopia; "better never means better for everyone...it always means worse for some." Atwood's journey to Iran allowed her to experience first-hand abuse of power by patriarchal forces in society, creating her inspiration for the novel and even in today's western world it is not hard to imagine, or see examples, of women's rights being removed, which therefore this hyperbolises the reaction of horror we have towards the events of the novel. Whereas Atwood employs a single narrator, Shelley uses three main narrators in her novel *Frankenstein*; Walton, Frankenstein and the monster. By using these three different narrators, Shelley emphasises the Chinese box structure of her narrative, as well as portraying many voices and therefore differing themes for the reader.

Throughout *The Handmaid's Tale*, Atwood uses Offred, the female protagonist and narrator of the novel, to represent the oppression of women. Abuse of power is instantly shown through the uniforms women in society are forced to wear. The red cloaks which the Handmaids must wear are "the colour of blood" and represent menstruation which, in the regime, is a positive symbol as it signals that the women are capable of carrying life. However, the conventional connotations of red are of danger and lust; therefore the reader views these uniforms as a signal from Atwood that the Handmaids position in society are far from perfect, but instead are destructive and negative. As all women wear the same and Offred is used to represent any Handmaid, forced to wear a colour she "never looked good [in]". Atwood never reveals to the reader the name of her protagonist, as it allows us to understand that any woman can be in the position of a Handmaid and makes us aware of what could happen if our lives were taken away also and remade anew. Instead, Offred is named after her Commander, Fred with Atwood using this as a device to portray the patriarchal society and how the females are objectified and owned by the men in the regime. The removal of the identity of the Handmaids is a violation and abuse of power, diminishing the personas of the handmaids and forcing them to submit to the regime. The lack of individuality in the rooms of the Handmaids, with "white ceilings" and "blank spaces" are "government proof" and therefore used to oppress individual radical thoughts and ideas, or even the choice to live or die, as the rooms are also suicide proof. Moreover, Offred has no freedom to live in her own way, freedom of voice, identity or death. These basic rights being removed seems unimaginable to the reader and therefore means the novel's shocking impact is even greater.

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Similarly, Shelley uses the multiple narrators in *Frankenstein* to represent the oppression of the Monster. As the monster's narrative is enclosed in Walton's letters and Victor's tale, the Chinese box structure implies close links between the narratives. As the monster's tale is embedded in Victor's this shows the inescapable ties between the two characters, but also how Victor will always have power over the monster, as he has the ability to end his narrative. Only when Victor's tale ends, can the Monster's begin, providing him with a voice and having the ability to constrain it, just as with Offred's power in *The Handmaid's Tale*. However, it could also be interpreted that the monster's narrative lies at the heart of the tale, representing Conrad's 'heart of darkness', without his narrative, neither Frankenstein's nor Walton's would stand. The monster as a narrator can be seen as the forbidden 'box' at the heart of the tale, which Victor foolishly opens, allowing horror and turmoil to spill out into the world. Therefore, Shelley also uses multiple narrators- a typical gothic feature- who all have contrasting emotions towards each other, creating confusion and chaos. In addition, the shift in narrative perspective affects the readers impressions, as the reader is first introduced to Frankenstein, by Victor, who sees him as a "monster", as "horror and disgust [fills] his heart". As this is the reader's first impression, it limits how much the monster can make an impact within his tale and his emotional plea is restrained, as lingering in the back of our minds we will always remember the horror of the description Victor provides of him. As his "yellow skin", "teeth of pearly whiteness" and "straight black lips", link him closely to a human being, this is more horrifying than if the monster was simply inhuman. Therefore, Shelley's use of Victor's narrative, before the monster's, represses the creature's power to emotionally attach to the reader.

Atwood uses Offred and names her after her Commander to present females being objectified by men in the regime and how they are the property "of" their Commander. The protagonist states how she has "another name, which no one uses now because it's forbidden", the fact that "no one" uses her name emphasises the total patriarchal control of the regime. Additionally, as her real name is "forbidden", the reader understands the serious implications which would occur if someone went against the power of the regime. The reader never knows her name and therefore she represents an everywoman. Atwood said that "the voice is that of an ordinary, more-or-less cowardly woman"; choosing an unconventional heroine, means that she's a character "with whom the reader can identify." Offred is passive towards the regime initially and represses herself. However, her language becomes increasingly agitated as passion takes over and she "[wants] it finished". As the text fills with anxiety, so does the reader as we start to reflect Offred's emotions. Throughout the novel Offred manages to retain her humanity, and "[intends] to last", which is the basis of the reader's relationship with the narrator, differing to the distance created between the reader and the narrators of *Frankenstein*, as the tale is too shocking for us to attach ourselves too closely.

Additionally, in *Frankenstein*, the use of various narrators could be a method to add plausibility to a tale which otherwise lacks truth to life and validity. By providing a range of perceptions and responses to events, Shelley allows herself to provide a more rounded view of what occurs, making her story more believable. This sense of dystopian possibilities, and its reliance on horror, parallels to the ideas that Atwood brings with *The Handmaid's Tale*. By creating a world so far from the reader's own, whilst still attaching parallels to reality, the authors are able to define the science fiction nature, and keep the readers engaged. In this sense, Walton's letters and narrative may have been used by Shelley to validate the idea of the monster, or monstrous effects of scientific pursuits as this was not the norm in the Victorian era or in Victorian literature. However, these tales are much more accepted in the 20th and 21st centuries as science and technology have advanced, bringing both positive, and horrific results.

Each key narrator Shelley uses may be considered as presenting a message. For instance, as Walton's narrative begins and ends the novel, he can structurally be seen as the narrative present. Below this layer, lies Victor's cautionary tale, which relates to Walton's potential future, and describes the dark path he may take in the future. At the deepest point of the novel lies the monster's narrative, which embodies the darkest psychological forces of the novel. The 'V' structure of the novel may suggest a descent into darkness and a re-emergence from it. Moreover, this also may represent an open-ended conclusion to the tale as there is uncertainty as to the monsters fate and Walton's future. Therefore, Shelley uses her narrators carefully to tell her story and provide key themes for the reader.

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A related point on how who is allowed to tell the tale concerns Atwood presentation of the Handmaids as forbidden to write, as "pen is envy"- an ironic comment by Atwood- and the patriarchy believes that "[their] big mistake was teaching [women] to read"; the men of the regime remove women's voices and consequently their identities. Offred tells her story in secret, and this is how both women are able to retain their identity. Offred slips reflectively into the past, in 'Night' sections of the novel, however the present moments are explicit, creating a contrasting structure. This differs to the structure of *Frankenstein*, in which the narrators are merged together as each narrative blurs at the edges, creating confusion as to who is speaking at times. Here, Shelley is able to create clear parallels between the monster and Victor, leading the reader to question which character is actually more monstrous, and the extent to which human desire is dangerous. This questioning provides the reader with a profound sense of insecurity and unease which underlies the gothic form itself.

In conclusion, Atwood uses Offred as her narrator in order to present how the abuse of power by the hierarchy depends upon the repression of most of the population, therefore creating a dystopian novel. Atwood presents a woman which the readers can relate to, and therefore can attach themselves too emotionally, creating an engaging narrative. On the other hand, Shelley uses multiple narrators, which interlink and blur together, in order to create an uncertainty for her reader, and enforce the gothic form of her novel. By using three different narrators, Shelley provides distance between her tale and the reader. This means that the Victorian reader at the time of production was potentially not as shocked or horrified by the narrative as they could have been. Shelley had to ensure that her story was engaging enough to be read, and not off-puttingly horrific as without this, there was no profit from her narrative. In both narratives, it is clear that the narrators play a defining part, not only in conventionally telling the story, but also as a mechanism to bring the reader deeper into the tale.

Markers comments:

Critical and evaluative about writer's craft, although expression lacks the sophistication of a very top band. Makes discriminating comparisons between texts but there's limited focus on context especially with *Frankenstein* (Victorian?!)

Second Marker

Review the response in the light of the first marker's comments and make your own notes on a separate sheet showing how the response itself covers the following areas:

How does the script cover key areas:	Shelley	Atwood
e.g Use of narrators - reliable?		
e.g		
e.g		
e.g		
e.g		
e.g		
Contexts: type and how revealed		

What overall mark and level would you award the script? Why?

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